

BECOMING CITTASLOW  
A CITY'S JOURNEY TO BECOMING A CITTASLOW MEMBER

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Master of City and Regional Planning

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## ABSTRACT

### Becoming Cittaslow: A City's Journey to Becoming a Cittaslow Member

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The project will explore Cittaslow as an alternative to traditional urban development. Sprawl and consumption of non-local resources are discouraged with Cittaslow and preservation of culture and history become the tangible benchmarks of the community. It will explore the history of Cittaslow as a movement and an organization; as well as its influences on existing member cities and the criteria used to distinguish them from others. The City of San Luis Obispo is used as a case study to determine whether existing conditions measure up to Cittaslow criteria.

Keywords: Cittaslow, Slow City, Slow Food, economic localism, sustainable, local

distinctiveness...

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## 1. Introduction

In today's increasingly competitive and corporate-centered global environment, many cities pursue economic development strategies in order to enhance their economic standing (Davies, 2004). This corporate-centered or mainstream approach to urban development can create an avenue toward unsustainable and standardized urban development patterns. This development approach typically relies heavily on outside resources, which can generate dependency leading to a lack of sensitivity of local history and culture (Mayer, Knox, 2006). Economic localism is the counter-development pattern to the mainstream approach (Imbroscio, 2003). Through economic localism, a community's economic stability is rooted in small businesses and community based organizations rather than large corporations. One such community-based organization is the Cittaslow (pronounced Cheet-a-slow) movement, which uses local distinctiveness to shape a city's urban development.

Cittaslow is an international membership organization that emerged in 1999. The movement was a community's reaction to the loss of cultural heritage and character, degraded landscape, and environment within communities. Overall, Cittaslow aims to improve the quality of life in urban environments by promoting local cultural uniqueness. Its philosophy or vision aims to remove itself from "corporate" or "global" homogeneity. As a member of Cittaslow, cities and towns commit to 55 goals that embody the Cittaslow philosophy. Cities that achieve the goals and principles of Cittaslow and thereby meet its criteria are eligible for membership. Other benefits, aside from charter certification include a greater sense of community and identity, where city residents lead



a more sustainable life and are more attuned to their local environment. People are also more attracted to Cittaslow communities that promote cultural uniqueness and increased tourism leads to increased local investment and economic localism.

The project will explore Cittaslow as an alternative to traditional urban development. Sprawl and consumption of non-local resources are discouraged with Cittaslow and preservation of culture and history become the tangible benchmarks of the community. It will explore the history of Cittaslow as a movement and an organization; as well as its influences on existing member cities and the criteria used to distinguish them from others.

The project will identify and define the criteria of Cittaslow and compare characteristics of San Luis Obispo (the City), California against these, yielding an action plan for the City to submit for review in order to become a potential member of Cittaslow.

## 2. List of Terms

For this context, the following terms are defined as follows:

- **Corporate-centered (mainstream):** Mainstream is defined or thought of as the majority (Weber, 2002). In today's globalized world, corporate-centered can be thought of as mainstream, as most countries would like economic relationships with one another. For this context, corporate-centered or mainstream development is thought of as a strategy focused on economic development which creates jobs of mostly poor quality, fiscal unsustainability, yields few public benefits, and puts more stress on already poor or distressed urban neighborhoods as well as the natural environment.
- **Cultural sustainability:** An approach aimed to raise the significance of culture and its factors in local, regional, and global sustainable development (Hawkes, 2005). It is having a greater awareness of 'who we are' in a growing world, in order to better understand the beliefs and values of a place.

- **Economic Localism:** Localism describes a range of political philosophies that prioritize ‘local’. Generally, it supports local production and consumption of goods, local control of government, and promotion of local history, culture, and identity (Milburn, 2004). Economic localism is the philosophy that supports local trade or investment versus international and seeks to minimize the globalization of a town’s history, culture, and identity.
- **Hospitality:** Hospitality is defined as “the friendly reception and treatment of guests or strangers or the quality or disposition of receiving and treating guests and strangers in a warm, friendly, generous way” (Weber, 2002). For this project, hospitality also refers to the relationship between guest and host or city and visitor or the relationship between local business owner and traveler.
- **Integrity of food:** Slow Food USA defines integrity of food as “an idea, a way of living and a way of eating...links the pleasure of food with a commitment to community and the environment.” It is the distribution of food that builds trust and connection between the producer and consumer creating respect between the land, farmers, and the food that is cultivated.
- **Local Distinctiveness:** Local implies neighborhood and distinctiveness is about particularity. ‘Local Distinctiveness’ links nature with culture, focusing on the positive investment people can make in their localities. It is about continuing history and culture through the generations with local customs, dialects, celebrations, names, recipes, myths, and legends (Clifford, King, 1993).
- **Relatively unspoiled:** In this context, it refers to landscape or environment that is unaltered. Urban growth has not yet affected the area as strongly as it has in more urban areas (Weber, 2002).
- **Urban development:** Urban development concerns itself with the control of the use of the land and design of the urban or built environment. For this context, urban development should guide and ensure the orderly development of communities to improve the built, economic and social environments of those communities (Wheeler, 1998).

### 3. Review of Existing Literature

Cittaslow requires cities that wish to obtain certification to meet a list of certain criteria that awards cities for efforts on promoting local distinctiveness, sustainability, and economic localism and overall improving the quality of life in the urban environment.

Cittaslow grew out of the Slow Food movement, an international organization

based on the integrity of food and cultural sustainability (Slow Food, nd). The integrity of food is maintained when cities or towns protect local food and traditions by promoting sustainable agriculture and artisan food production. Through this process, a link between the producer and consumer is created and the integrity of food is increased. Cittaslow builds from this integrity and cultural sustainability and applies it to development in the urban environment (Mayer, Knox, 2006).

### 3.1 Slow Food

Slow Food emerged from the opposition to the opening of a commercial fast food chain in Bra, Italy. Carlos Petrini, founder of Slow Food (Radstrom, 2011), considered the encroachment of fast food a direct threat to local foodways and

traditional culture of the area. Chain restaurants were becoming more widespread in Italian towns and cities and Petrini foresaw a corporate food industry, which could in turn destroy Italy's sense of identity and connection to cultural sustainability. Fast food is also counter to the important Italian tradition and way of life of leisurely dining. Leisurely dining enhances the social aspect of food and leads to a cultural connection to place and its traditional recipes. In 1986, the Slow Food organization was inaugurated and in 1989 the organization created its constitution (Slow Food, nd) protecting local foodways in Italy.

The organization continued to support local and traditional cuisine as well as began to promote sustainable food practices. Local food was seen as being of higher



Figure 1: Slow Food International Logo. ([www.slowfood.com](http://www.slowfood.com))

quality, or having greater integrity (Mayer, Knox, 2006). Traditional cuisine also created a sense of place and community through the relationship of local farms, produce and connection of producer with consumer. Essentially, the Slow Food organization would incorporate the cultural philosophy of local foods, creating a healthier and more culturally sustainable environment for residents and its visitors.



Slow Food became an international organization “with 80,000 members who organize in over 800 local chapters...in more than 100 countries” (Mayer, Knox, 2009). Cities and towns that had a desire to link their own local food and farms to consumption and promote traditional cuisine and cultural sustainability joined the membership organization. The organization also spurred “eco-gastronomy” (Radstrom, 2011), “the notion that eating well can, and should go hand in hand with protecting the environment” (Honoré, 2004). The integrity of food would be preserved above all as the objective of the Slow Food organization. Increasing popularity and expansion of the organization led to include ecological and environmental sustainability (Radstrom, 2011). The foundation of Slow Food (based on integrity of food and cultural sustainability) and the emergence of new inspirations (ecological and environmental sustainability) became the source for the Cittaslow movement, which applies these concepts to development of the urban environment.

Both Slow Food and Cittaslow aim to promote sustainability of culture. Mayer and Knox differentiate between the two by characterizing Slow Food as a means to preserve local distinctiveness as it relates to food, sense of place, and hospitality (Mayer, Knox, 2006). Cittaslow, and its member cities, build off of these elements and place emphasis on the preservation of local history and traditions by focusing on local distinctiveness as it relates to sustainable urban development. Sustainable urban development as defined by Campbell, links the environment, equity, and economy. These “three E's” (Campbell, 1996), when linked together work to protect the natural environment from urban sprawl, promote social equity so that all city residents are included in development decisions, and finally encourage economic localism or local investment. When used together, development can be considered sustainable and cities begin to reflect 'slow' growth. However, 'slow', as Radstrom argues does not necessarily relate to speed (Radstrom, 2011). Instead, 'slow' relates to the production and development of assets or resources (i.e. food production, using local assets and employment local specialties). The responsibility of a community's ecological and environmental sustainability lies then in the city residents' and local leaders' value of the community's history, traditions, and cultures using an alternative approach to urban development.

### **3.2 Influences from Social Movements**

Cittaslow as an alternative to mainstream urban development was encouraged by the Slow Food movement, but also has roots in the social movements that emerged in the seventies and eighties (Bianchini, 1993). Prior, city development was focused on a corporate-centered economy, where economic development was at the forefront of urban

development; cities would compete with other cities in the global market. This was at the expense of city's social programs and as a result, quality of life for residents deteriorated. In response, residents began to demand cultural policies that would increase the significance of the place and its people instead of economy as well as a calmer and less polluted physical environment.

Other activities, which have a clear cultural dimension and connection to the Cittaslow philosophy, are those cultural strategies related to grassroots and social movements (Bianchini, 1993). These emerged about the same time as environmentalism and community action began to drive urban development policies in cities. Where environmentalism sought to protect the natural environment, community action sought to widen access to cultural facilities and activities for all city residents. Local identity and public sociability grew because of these new policies and encouraged more forms of public life. Similar to Cittaslow, the emphasis on social and cultural activities led to better urban design strategies for new and existing public spaces (Bianchini, 1993) and created greater community cohesion.

Finally, cultural policies were also developed as a reaction to the decline in traditional ways of life. "Prestigious cultural projects acted as symbols of rebirth, renewed confidence and dynamism in declining cities" (Bianchini, 1993). Cities began to look for alternative economic niches in order to promote this new idea of 'local'. Cities began to tie their history and culture with economy and as a result, a new pattern of urban development emerged. Cities would focus on historical and organic design (Mayer, Knox, 2006). The city center would emerge as a catalyst for cultural activities and public

sociability, and also for local businesses to connect with the consumer. Internal growth instead of sprawl became most important.

The generation of wealth and employment with this new kind of urban development was modest (Bianchini, 1993). However, when compared to the positive image of the city that evolved, tourism and local investment created a more competitive city. Cities benefited from new economic niches – tourism, local artisan businesses, and historical resources. Historical and local resources were used as a means to attract investment and flaunt ownership of those resources within the city. Environmental improvement initiatives were also included in cultural strategies as a means of creating greater local identity and sense of community.

Cultural policies from the seventies and eighties became one component of place or identity making. A city's utilization of local resources generated greater social and community cohesion, increased environmental awareness and historical preservation – the basic philosophy of Cittaslow.

#### **4. Cittaslow**

The twentieth century city had to face a great number of problems including elements such as noise, pollution, unplanned construction, poverty and crime, to name a few. These issues led to the questioning of livability parameters in many cities as local values, landscape, history and culture, and over-consumption of natural ecosystems and local communities became devalued by the resident and visitor



Figure 3: Cittaslow International  
Logo ([www.cittaslow.org](http://www.cittaslow.org))

(Wheeler, 2004). Slow food sought to catalyze a cultural shift away from the destructive effects of the fast food system and the effect it can have on small towns. It directed cities toward the regenerative cultural, ecological, social, and economic benefits of a traditional and more sustainable food system. Cittaslow, now an international network of small towns, embodies the Slow Food philosophy and connects it to urban design and planning which combats the problems associated with the twentieth century city. Cittaslow focuses on a set of goals that aim to improve the quality of life of its citizens and its visitors.

By encouraging this framework, Cittaslow anticipates each city will establish a sense of place or expand the existing sense of place and identity. A number of beneficial social expressions such as a feeling of belonging to an environment and being part of a neighborhood become a valued effect. The city also benefits as a member through the network of national and international Cittaslow networks (Heitmann, Robinson and Povey, 2011) where cities can share ideas, experiences and knowledge of community development that is sensitive to local history, culture, environment, and encouragement of locally rooted small businesses.

Communities are able to recognize strengths and weaknesses measured against Cittaslow criteria and provide a well-defined alternative agenda in order to meet those criteria. Member cities pursue local programs, policies, and projects where they utilize local products as mediators of local economic, social, and cultural distinctiveness. Overall, Cittaslow membership has had a positive effect on the urban areas and quality of life of residents and visitors.



That positive effect has attracted and spread the Cittaslow philosophy globally. As of June 2011, the Cittaslow International Network identified 24 countries that included 147 member cities (Cittaslow, 2011). For each city to have become a member, the population must be less than 50,000. Each city must also comply with a list of criteria covering policies that extend six pillars; environment, infrastructure, urban fabric, local produce and products, hospitality and community, and Cittaslow awareness (Cittaslow Statute, 1999). In the Cittaslow Statute signed in Orvieto on October 15, 1999 by Carlos Petrini (Cittaslow, 2011), founder and President of Slow Food and Cittaslow, and the Mayors of Bra, Greve in Chianti, Orvieto and Positano, clearly specify that Cittaslow towns are those where:

*...an environmental policy is carried on with the aim of maintaining and developing the characteristics of the territory and the urban fabric...promoted to improve the quality of the environment and the urban fabric; the production and use of natural and organic food products produced with techniques that respect the environment...indigenous products rooted in the culture and traditions and that contribute to the identification of the territory are safeguarded...quality of hospitality is promoted as an important link to the community and its unique characteristics...an awareness is promoted among all citizens and operators, an awareness that they live in a Cittaslow town, focused particularly on young people and schools through a systematic education in taste (Cittaslow Statute, 1999)*

These ideologies need not only apply to a small city wishing to gain membership with Cittaslow. They can be applied to cities of all sizes. Any city can become a supporter of Cittaslow and follow the localized and sustainable community principles Cittaslow embodies. City policies can reflect these policies to maintain or develop characteristics of the smaller Cittaslow cities. This kind of action can protect and develop a sense of identity and sense of place by linking communities to its unique characteristics. In metropolitan areas like Los Angeles or New York City, policies can focus on promoting awareness and education in smaller neighborhoods within large metropolitan

regions where citizens and local operators can begin to develop an urban fabric that respects the environment and the quality or attractiveness of the neighborhood.

## 5. Cittaslow Member Cities

### 5.1 Cittaslow USA



Figure 4: Cittaslow USA  
Logo ([www.cittaslowusa.org](http://www.cittaslowusa.org))

On June 26, 2010, members from Sebastopol, Sonoma, and Fairfax celebrated the formation of Cittaslow USA at the International Cittaslow Assembly in Seoul, Korea. It began with Sonoma Valley. “The people fit the land instead of forcing the land to fit the people” (Cittaslow USA, 2011). Sonoma chose to be Cittaslow by claiming its own values instead of being another look-alike city. Fairfax and Sebastopol would follow, carrying with them the same small town character and cultural richness Cittaslow symbolizes.

#### 5.1.1 Sonoma Valley, California, United States

Sonoma was designated as the first Cittaslow member city in the United States (Cittaslow USA, 2011). Sonoma is located 38 miles north of San Francisco, California and is known most as a wine country town. It has a unique blend of organic smallholdings, small and large vineyards, family wineries, retail stores, and high-tech communications. It is a popular destination city, attracting nearby and overseas visitors. Its historic town square offers a weekly farmers’ market with live jazz seven months of the year, and picnicking and play areas for all ages year ‘round. With its mild



icturesque Sonoma Valley,  
[www.cittaslowusa.org](http://www.cittaslowusa.org))

Mediterranean climate, progressive point of view, growth limits, viticulture, and a robust arts community, Sonoma Valley retains its village personality and pastoral roots while integrating new technology into infrastructure.

Sonoma Valley residents include descendants of Native American, Mexican, Italian, French, and German settlers as well as newer generations from Portugal, Tibet, Finland, Nepal, the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia, Israel, Thailand, Russia, and many South and Central American countries, as well as every area of the United States. It has a notable dairy, beef, and cheese making businesses as well as thriving olive farms and olive oil production, lavender fields and nut groves, with a number of nationally known cultural, agricultural and arts festivals throughout the year (Cittaslow USA, 2011).

Cittaslow Sonoma Valley Foundation (CSVF) helped Sonoma Valley become a Cittaslow member. The local organization is a nonprofit that seeks private funding, and is beginning to make partnerships with government and community organizations that share its philosophy. Projects which the CSVF share with the Cittaslow philosophy and engage to preserve the quality of life within Sonoma Valley include community-wide partnerships to preserve Sonoma Valley's environment, working with Slow Food Sonoma Valley on local sustainable food projects, teaching programs for students in order to raise responsible community citizens, designing family-friendly activities for residents and visitors alike, and supporting cultural, heritage, multigenerational, and multi-cultural programs (Cittaslow USA, 2011).

Examples of some of these projects and programs include "A Cittaslow Sonoma Valley Event" Program, where the criteria and program for co-branding events with businesses and nonprofits. Cittaslow Sonoma Valley Dinners supports local food

production where organizations throughout the year (Arbor Day, Plein Air, Sonoma Valley Classical Music events, Grange Sonoma Valley) will partner with Cittaslow Sonoma Valley Dinners to serve locally produced foods (Cittaslow Sonoma, nd).

### 5.1.2 Fairfax, California



In June 2010, Cittaslow International approved Fairfax for membership. The town is an “environmentally conscious community situated in the heart of central Marin County as is considered the most progressive of Marin’s 11 incorporated cities” (Town of Fairfax General Plan, 2010). The current population is approximately 7,441 and according to the 2010 United States Census Bureau has a total area of 2.2 square miles. On April 4, 2012, Fairfax updated its General Plan to reflect its goal of holding on to its small town character (Fairfax Town Manager Blog, 2012) and a blueprint for the next twenty years.

In addition to updating the General Plan, current ordinances encourage local businesses and retail stores, and prevent chain stores, Styrofoam food packaging and plastic bags. The local movie theatre retains an art deco ambiance and is the foci of a vibrant nightlife with venues for jazz and other popular music. The Fairfax Festival is hosted every year and supports a variety of activities and attractions for children and adults of all ages, including a parade, music, flea market, local arts and crafts, as well as locally produced food.

As well as maintaining numerous cultural venues for entertainment, Fairfax is also surrounded by “committed open space and a nature preserve” (Town of Fairfax

General Plan, 2010). Its Mediterranean climate encourages outdoor activities year round and invites many tourists and visitors to the area annually.

The Town of Fairfax is connected to many organizations in the community. The town's website has a host of links where residents and tourists can navigate to the cultural, historical, or media of their choice. Among other links, the new General Plan is also available on the website, where the public can view changes such as a new Town Center Plan, Zoning Changes to preserve the historic character of the downtown, reduce automobile dependency by encouraging public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation, and the creation of a Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Town of Fairfax General Plan, 2010).

### **5.1.3 Sebastopol, California**

Cittaslow Sebastopol claims it has been a “slow city” for years. It has supported local products through agriculture and the arts, promoted hospitality similar to the “slow travel” philosophy, used technology wisely, encouraged community connectedness despite the very diverse population, preserved the environment, and created human-friendly infrastructure (City of Sebastopol, nd).

The City of Sebastopol is a small semi-urban community located in northern California. It was incorporated to California in 1902, and its current population is approximately 7,800 people (City of



oodstuffs Sebastopol,  
.cittaslowusa.org)

Sebastopol, nd). Sebastopol is located in a region that produces the majority of the world supply of Gravenstein apples (City of Sebastopol, nd) and more recently has become a significant grape-growing region for wines.

Becoming a member of Cittaslow helped Sebastopol number of ways by promoting awareness, improving exposure, economic benefits including national and international exposure, benefits for local businesses, creating an avenue for increased events and programs in the city, and networking/social benefits internationally and nationally.

Today, Sebastopol is a vibrant, creative community. In addition to being the arts and creative hub of Western Sonoma County, Sebastopol is a leader in local efforts to address climate change (City of Sebastopol, nd). The City itself and the community as a whole are leaders in energy and water conservation efforts. Its special qualities and unique geographical setting attract visitors and residents from all over, as well as new commercial and industrial businesses. The community continues to work together towards creation of a sustainable local economy, a key feature in embodying the Cittaslow way of life.

## **5.2 Cittaslow International**

Since its conception, the Cittaslow objective was to be a hallmark for municipalities globally. It naturally spread as experiences and ideas were exchanged between all participants and each participant offered an innovative, sustainable and excellent platform for future members. “First and foremost, a Cittaslow is a community of citizens that looks after and cares for each other...and stimulates the social cohesion between the citizens” (Cittaslow, 2011) of not just member cities, but potential cities as

well. Cittaslow spread internationally thanks to the fundamental characteristic of the Slow Movement, expanding the global community of ‘slow’ to enhance quality of life within every city.

### 5.2.1 Levanto, Italy

Levanto, a town of approximately 5,000 residents is a gateway to the region of Cinque Terre in Liguria, a province located east of Genoa. Steep terraced hills sweep



Figure 8: Levanto, Italy Site Map  
(<http://www.wolframalpha.com>)

across the Mediterranean coast bordering this town.

Because Levanto is one of a few towns in Cinque Terre with easy access by train and automobile, many tourists begin their vacation here.

The economic history of Levanto, like many other towns in Italy, begins with wine production.

However, because of the steep hills of the region, wine making was a difficult industry and was lost to younger generations because of the maintenance of

the cultural landscape and dangers (Petrini, 2001). It was Slow Food that prompted the revitalization and protection of the vineyards. Focus was turned to the quality of the locally produced wine, Sciaccetra wine (Mayer, Knox, 2009). Wine makers were able to fetch higher prices for the wine making wine production economically appealing and interesting again for youth in the area.

Levanto joined the Slow City movement boasting its medieval plazas, loggias (gallery or corridor) and churches set along the Mediterranean coast. By joining Cittaslow, Levanto’s main objective was to protect its small town character through a

series of action plans. One plan focused on illumination, aimed at reducing light pollution, another implemented a system for environmental management, and another gave incentives to business owners for façade improvements to restore and protect historically significant buildings. Because of Levanto's appeal to tourists, community economic development focused on a locally based bed and breakfast infrastructure that supported local businesses as well as created easier access for visitors.

Their example shows how a tourist-driven small town can facilitate tourism that benefits small business owners while at the same time retaining a slow quality of life.

### 5.2.2 Diss, United Kingdom

Diss is a small town located in East Anglia in the United Kingdom. It was the 3<sup>rd</sup> city in the United Kingdom to become a member of Cittaslow. However, prior to membership, it was a town visitors were more likely to travel through instead of to (Cittaslow UK, 2011). The town, though full of 16<sup>th</sup> century buildings and known for a 700 year old market/fair (Cittaslow UK, 2011) had been one of many struggling post-industrial market towns, where high streets have been deserted, as well as local shops have been abandoned.



Figure 9: Diss, United Kingdom Site Map (<http://www.wolframalpha.com>)

Local government and community organizations took initiative through a partnership with the European Union (EU). The EU helped fund (£100,000) projects that would improve quality of life and also create greater community cohesion. Projects would also be funded in order to meet specific



Cittaslow criteria, beginning with rebranding Diss as a Cittaslow candidate. Community organizations worked to provide activities and educational opportunities for residents to understand the Cittaslow philosophy. A tourist information center would provide materials to city residents and visitors to identify local projects and events, as well as educate the public on opportunities and activities in the Diss area. A 19<sup>th</sup> century building located in the heart of Diss, Corn Hall, once used for corn exchange, would be rehabilitated as an imaginative and thriving arts hall for local artists and concerts. Diss also moved to improve the sustainability of the local clay lump industry through training opportunities and audits (Cittaslow UK, 2011).

Diss, today, continues to commit to the Cittaslow principles. Local organizations, churches, and museum initiatives support educational opportunities for local residents. Currently, the city is working to develop demand in the local construction industry for traditional building techniques using local materials such as clay lump.

### 5.2.3 Seferihisar, Turkey

Seferihisar is located in the southwest axis of Izmir which is the third largest city located in the western part of Turkey (Dogrusoy, Dalgakiran, 2011). The city was accepted to the

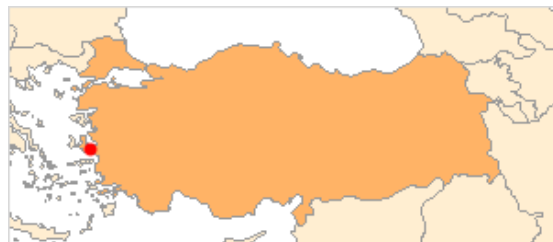


Figure 10: Seferihisar, Turkey Site Map  
(<http://www.wolframalpha.com>)

Cittaslow network in December 2009 and became the first slow city of Turkey (Cittaslow Statute, 1999). The city is a coastal settlement with approximately 27,000 inhabitants as well as rich cultural and historical values. Agriculture, animal husbandry and tourism are among the main economic activities in the city.

One major problem in cities across Turkey, similar to issues seen in most twentieth century cities, is unplanned development. Unplanned development is development on land that is not currently being used. Seferihisar was facing this issue as well as a loss of its original architectural characteristics due to architectural trends (Dogrusoy, Dalgakiran, 2011). The local government initiated strategies implemented to combat these issues, including revitalizing the local economy and increasing its tourist potential.

Seferihisar began by organizing communal meetings in order to raise awareness of city residents about the philosophy of Cittaslow. Resulting from these community meetings was a host of strategies identified by the local government and city residents. Several local projects would fulfill the Cittaslow charter's criteria for becoming a member as well as improve quality of life for residents and visitors in Seferihisar.

One of the most important local projects identified from the community meeting was the transformation of the open area facing the old municipal building into a village market. Local producers and craftsmen would be able to sell their products as well as organize local festivals revolving around local products. The festivals would also provide opportunity to document local cuisine through oral history in an attempt to protect and maintain local traditions, culture and economic heritage. A second open air market would be established by rehabilitating Sigacik Castle in a way that it enables the hosting of cultural activities, where handcrafts, organic and home-made including food could be sold. The city would also provide gastronomy and organic farming in educational institutions to keep produce local and sustainable. "Women Centers" and "Youth Centers" for social solidarity, economic contribution and individual development are the

most recent implementations of the local government. Finally, increasing the number of avenues closed to traffic within certain hours, and promoting the use of phaetons and solar energy-powered bicycles in transportation are among the short term plans for enhancing sustainable transportation (Dogrusoy, Dalgakiran, 2011).

Seferihisar's initial phase to becoming a member of Cittaslow was key to their success. Raising awareness of the philosophy of Cittaslow provided city residents with a commitment to the movement and an attachment to the program. Resident's dedication to the philosophy enabled the preservation of local traditions, culture and economic heritage. In this case, Cittaslow principles gave guidance for solving local problems.

## **6. Research**

The objective of this paper is to explore the significance of Cittaslow as an alternative to homogenized urban development. This paper will identify the Cittaslow criteria that shape a city's built environment and seek to understand the rationale behind them. The primary research method will be archival, focusing on two phases, a literature review and case study. The City of San Luis Obispo will be used as the case study. Existing conditions in the City of San Luis Obispo will be measured against the Cittaslow criteria to determine whether the city's current strategies and philosophies match Cittaslow objectives.

The following research questions were employed throughout the project:

- What are the 55 Cittaslow social indicators?
- What is the rationale behind the indicators and how are they applied to cities applying for membership?

- How do the existing conditions of the City of San Luis Obispo measure against the Cittaslow criteria?
- What actions for San Luis Obispo and recommendations need to be considered where criteria are not met?

## **6.1 Methodology**

The first phase consisted of collecting and organizing a variety of articles and books related to the history and influences of Cittaslow. What became most challenging was finding information in relation to the Cittaslow criteria. For every archive collected, the only information available was a list of the 55-Cittaslow criteria, without definitions. Instead, each criterion was researched independently based on the general theme. For example, criterion A4 from Environmental Goals states “Mechanisms to measure light pollution and action plans to reduce it”; however, it was missing a rationale on what that means and how it could be applied to different cities applying for membership. Archival research revolved around ‘light pollution’ and the policies and programs cities or organizations utilize to reduce it. Completing the identification and definition of each Cittaslow criterion satisfied two of the four research questions.

The next phase involved the research of San Luis Obispo as a case study. This would involve an inventory in tabular and graphic forms. Existing city policies, land uses, and businesses were identified in order to determine whether the city meets each Cittaslow criteria. This was a critical component in research because it determined the substance of the action plan. It identified what was missing or what was not fulfilled measured against the criteria, and provided an avenue to recommend what policies or programs could be implemented to satisfy the specific environment, economic, or equity criterion.

In addition to city policies, land uses, and businesses, other important information needed was the collection of maps used to locate municipalities, public facilities, parks, open space, plazas, historical and cultural resources, festivals, and farmers' markets. While the literature review contained majority of the information, graphics and maps help visualize the criteria as well as provide graphics for referenced items including existing conditions in the City.

This project, upon completion, is the sum of an in depth literature review on the history of Cittaslow and how a city pursues membership through defining principles and measuring existing city conditions against them. The document should be seen as a toolkit for the City to use in order to strategize becoming a Cittaslow member should they choose this path.

## **6.2 Instruments**

The following instruments were used to support the archival research documented throughout this text.

- Materials and resources collected from the City websites. Resources include the City of San Luis Obispo General Plan, Zoning Regulations, and San Luis Obispo Climate Action Plan. Each identifies significant places of interest, such as, historical sites, cultural heritage sites, municipalities, and public facilities, as they apply to San Luis Obispo, California and to the Cittaslow criteria.
- The United States 2010 Census website was used to gather demographic and economic data for the City. An important reason for knowing demographic and economic data is so growth strategies can be formulated to satisfy Cittaslow criteria.

## **7. Findings**

### **7.1 Cittaslow Criteria**

There are 55 individual Cittaslow goals. Each Cittaslow town commits to work to achieve each of these goals, but is not required to achieve all. The goals are the basis for the charter of the movement. The movement uses a quality of life indicator system to certify and reassess the membership towns. “It is grounded in a charter, which defines normative criteria” (Mayer, Knox, 2009). It is this link to action that holds the potential for effective change because each indicator or criterion is linked to an action plan. That action plan proves to Cittaslow a level of commitment towards implementation of the Cittaslow Charter.

Cittaslow members pursue to make life better for the residents living in the urban environment, improve the quality of life in the city, resist the homogenization, protect the environment, promote cultural diversity and uniqueness, and provide inspiration to other cities for a healthier lifestyle.

### **7.2 Environmental Goals**

#### **A1: Apparatus to test air quality and report on conditions.**

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines air quality as a measurement of the amount of pollutants in the air or a description of healthiness and safety in the atmosphere (WHO, 2005). “Clean air is considered to be a basic requirement of human health and well-being” (WHO, 2005), however, across the globe human health is threatened by poor air quality. The WHO has developed air quality guidelines intended for worldwide use but have been developed only to support actions to achieve air quality that protects public health specific to each country. Air quality standards are then

published by each country, for example the United States requires local, state, and federal jurisdictions to set air quality standards pursuant to their location. Though air quality standards may be different, they are all designed and intended to guide “policy-makers and to provide appropriate targets for a broad range of policy options for air quality management in different parts of the world” (WHO, 2005).

In order to set air quality standards at all levels, and follow the WHO air quality guidelines, air quality in a city must be tested and reported. Air quality management programs use the collected and/or available atmospheric data provided to set local standards and educate the public in order to significantly reduce air pollutant emissions from stationary and mobile sources (WHO, 2005).

## **A2: Policies to maintain the quality of water supplies and ensure pollution free water in rivers and waterways.**

Our global hydrologic cycle is complex and diverse, and yet, so easily altered through natural processes and human activity. Water quality has become a global issue of concern as human populations grow, industrial and agricultural activities expand, and climate change threatens to cause major alterations to the hydrologic cycle (UN Water, 2011).

The chemical, biological and physical characteristics of our waterways are influenced by land uses. Agriculture, industry, mining, power generation, and forestry practices are just a few that influence the quality of waterways. However, it is human settlement and agricultural and industrial production that impact our waterways the most (UN Water, 2011). In the United States, manure run-off from agricultural practices is the single greatest source of water pollution. In countries Argentina, China, India and Sudan, excessive groundwater extraction has caused the intrusion of saline saltwater into most aquifers (UN Water, 2011). An effective response to these kinds of issues impacting the

quality and quantity of global water supplies should be implemented through useful strategies that ensure pollution free water in rivers and waterways and maintain the quality of water supplies locally. Additionally, actions at various levels to achieve those strategies may include but are not limited to better understanding of water quality and its impact through improved monitoring, data collection and analysis, and scenario building, more effective communication, education and advocacy, improved financial and economic approaches, improved legal and institutional arrangements, and improved technology and infrastructure (UN Water, 2011).

### **A3: Plans for the implementation of new composting technology and the promotion of home composting.**

In 1991, the urban population in Bangladesh was 20.8 million people (Waste Concern, 2010). Total urban waste generation (ton/day) was approximately 6,493 ton/day. It is expected that in 2025, urban population will be 78.44 million and waste generation will be upwards of 47,000 ton/day (Waste Concern, 2010). While waste management is mainly focused with the “end-of-pipe solution” (based on collection, transportation, and disposal) it is not focused on the high amount of organic material that is mixed in (mixed waste). Problems associated with this kind of disposal include overcrowded landfills, water pollution, green house gas emissions, odor pollution, and more land required for additional landfill locations (Waste Concern, 2010). Waste Concern helped Bangladesh begin a path toward composting at the source (at home) as well as providing funding for compost plants (Waste Concern, 2010).

Plans for the implementation of new composting technology should begin at the source. Cities should encourage users to separate waste at the source in order to decrease the unit of waste delivered per day to landfills. Organic material separated from waste bins can then be home composted, or sent to decentralized compost plants at a small (3



tons/day), medium (3-10 tons/day), or large scale (>11 tons/day) (Waste Concern, 2010).

Opportunities for each city include improved recycling, reduced green house gas emissions, reduced cost of solid waste management, job creation, improved health and environment (especially in third world countries), and improved soil and water conditions (Waste Concern, 2010).

#### **A4: Mechanisms to measure light pollution and action plans to reduce it.**

The International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) defines light pollution as “any adverse effect of artificial light, including sky glow, glare, light trespass, light clutter, decreased visibility at night, and energy waste” (IDA, nd). Light pollution can impact human health and affect the surrounding ecological community (IDA, nd). Identifying light pollution and reducing it within a community can enable the exploration of new avenues of technology that are energy efficient and direct light downward, where it is needed, rather than upward, where it contributes to sky glow and other forms of light pollution.

#### **A5: Incentives to encourage the use of alternative energy sources.**

Every day the world produces carbon dioxide from fossil fuels and it is released into the Earth’s atmosphere. The increased content of carbon dioxide increases the warmth of our planet and is one of the major contributors to climate change, “for these and other reasons, there is a global focus on finding resource efficient, low-carbon ways to supply enough energy to ensure sustainable growth of economies across the world” (KPMG, 2011). Alternative sources of energy define energy sources that have comparable effects to current technologies, but do not emit carbon dioxide (KPMG, 2011). These alternatives can include wind energy, solar energy, geothermal energy, or hydroelectric energy sources.

Along with new technology and regulations to reduce carbon emissions and achieve energy security, many governments are turning to tax relief or incentives to promote alternative energy sources. Types of tax incentives include credits and grants (KPMG, 2011) for businesses. The International Energy Agency estimated that government support worldwide in 2009 amounted to \$37 billion (US) for electricity and renewables (KPMG, 2011).

**A6: Mechanisms to measure electromagnetic pollution and action plans to reduce it.**

The Ministry for the Environment and Territory (MET) identifies electromagnetic pollution is emitted in the form of low frequencies or high intensity radio frequencies and microwaves (MET, nd). The Consumer Health Organization of Canada recognizes sources of this type of pollution to be power lines, satellite dishes, cellular telephones, radar sites, video display terminals, electrical appliances within the average home, geomagnetic fields, and electromagnetic therapy (Michrowski, 1991). This type of pollution “undermines human health due to the warming of tissues, discharges and induced waves” (MET, nd). Risk perception of electromagnetic pollution has prompted the WHO to urge further researches on the exposure to the pollution in order to properly assess their potential consequences on human health. Health hazards must be tackled through a two way process: by promoting emission reduction and energy saving, by implementing monitoring of emissions sources and improving the efficiency of those sources (MET, nd).

**A7: Apparatus to measure noise pollution and policies to reduce it.**

Noise is defined as unwanted sound (EPA UK, nd). It is a source of irritation and stress for many and can even damage hearing if it is loud enough. In July 2009, the International Institute of Noise Control Engineering (I-INCE) released a survey of

legislation, regulation, and guidelines for control of community noise. Its purpose or goal was to aid in the development of global policies on noise control (I-INCE, 2009). Their review on national-level approaches to controlling community noise revealed that there were many differences in approaches to national control of community noise making it difficult to provide recommendations for a standardized approach (I-INCE, 2009). A local policy approach to reducing noise pollution should be implemented by each city. If noise from a noise source does not comply with local policy noise goals, local governments or another administering agency should require some form of action to be taken to reduce the noise. This environmental criterion reflects noise classified as an unwanted sound, noise pollution resulting from an activity such as school, railway, airports, or vehicles should be approached in accordance with local policies and on a case-by-case basis.

**A8: Policies to eliminate advertising and signage clutter.**

Policies to eliminate advertising and signage clutter establishes standards that assure the provision of signs are adequate to meet essential communication needs while safeguarding the rights of the people in the community to a safe, healthful, and attractive environment for both local residents and tourists (Bertucci, 2006). Most commonly, communities adopt a sign ordinance in order to communicate the general standards and regulations of signs throughout a community as specified by the United States Sign Council (USSC, nd).

**A9: Application of a formal Environmental Management System.**

An environmental management system (EMS) refers to the management of an organizations environmental program in a comprehensive, systematic, planned and documented manner. An EMS serves as a tool to improve environmental performance

within a community, manages and organizes community environmental affairs, addresses immediate and long-term impacts of products, services, and processes on the environment, and gives order and consistency for other organizations addressing environmental concerns in a community (EPA, nd).

#### **A10: Participation in and support for local Agenda 21 projects.**

Agenda 21 is a comprehensive plan of action of the United Nations related to sustainable development and was the formidable outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992 (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, nd). Similar to Cittaslow, membership and participation in support for local Agenda 21 projects is completely voluntary (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, nd). Structure and content of Agenda 21 are divided into four main sections – Social and Economic Dimensions, Conservation and Management of Resources for development, Strengthening the Role of Major Groups, and Means of Implementation. Along with the foundation of sustainable development that Agenda 21 holds, it also draws up document guidelines for local cultural policies that advocate and establish the groundwork of any undertaking by cities and local governments for cultural development (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, nd).

### **7.3 Infrastructure Goals**

#### **B1: Existence of well-maintained public green spaces.**

Public space is a vital part of the community (Carmona et al. 2003). A high-quality public environment can have a significant impact on the economic and cultural life of urban areas, big or small, and is therefore an essential part of a community's unique character. Public spaces are open to all, regardless of origin, age or gender, and as

such can shape the cultural identity of an area and provide a sense of place for local communities. Well-maintained public green spaces provide meeting places for community activities, foster social ties of a kind that have been disappearing in many areas, and become a focal point for a community's unique character.

**B2: Development and implementation of an integrated traffic management and access strategy that addresses the needs of pedestrians and conserves the historic character of the town.**

One of the fundamental functions of public space is that it allows us to move around on foot, by bicycle, by car, or public transport. A key objective of public-space design and management is therefore to reconcile the needs of these often-conflicting modes of transport. Well-designed streets and public spaces encourage walking and cycling, and have the power to create strategies for safer pedestrian transport while conserving the historic character of a community.

**B3: Disability friendly access to public places and public offices.**

Access describes the degree to which services and environments are available to as many people as possible (US Dept. of Justice, 2005). In 1990, the U.S. Congress signed into law the American Disabilities Act (ADA). It prohibits the discrimination of any person based on disability and protects those with disabilities against any type of discrimination, comparable to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 where discrimination based on race, religion, sex, national origin, or other characteristics is illegal. The term "disability" is defined by the ADA as a "physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity" (US Dept. of Justice, 2010). Discrimination can come in all forms including, accessibility (US Dept. of Justice, 2005). If men and women are not able to access public places, spaces, and services based on a physical or mental impairment, this is in direct violation of the ADA (US Dept of Justice, 2010).

In order to establish equal opportunity to public places, spaces, and services, accessible design and standards should be established. In 2010, the United States Department of Justice released the *2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design* detailing design standards for buildings and environments (public spaces) founded on the American Disabilities Act 1990. The standards set minimum requirements for newly designed and constructed or altered State and local government facilities, public accommodations, and commercial facilities to be readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities (US Dept. of Justice, 2010).

Enforcing these kinds of design standards within a city is an important component to becoming a part of Cittaslow. Current residents or future residents with disabilities and visitors wanting to experience the cities culture and traditions need to have access to public services. Allowing all individuals, despite impairments, equal access to public facilities, spaces, and places creates an accepting and friendlier environment.

#### **B4: Infrastructure that facilitates alternative mobility such as walking and cycling.**

“Roads enable economic and social development...with adequate investment for sustainable road infrastructure that is inclusive of non-motorized users, the benefits of these investments will grow and the environmental and socio-economic costs of road building and use can be minimized” (UNEP, 2010). Most roads have been developed with the motor vehicle as the principal user (UNEP, 2010). For a city or town looking to ensure development or sprawl does not take away small-town charm and culture, towns should seek a more sustainable mobility path. The most critical component in sustainable mobility is the role of alternative mobility such as walking and cycling (UNEP, 2010). This kind of infrastructure should be integrated with current road infrastructure to encourage sustainable transportation while also providing safe facilities for non-motorized users. Facilities investments are crucial in order to provide safe routes for local and non-local non-motorized users (UNEP, 2010).

The Netherlands and Denmark are two frequently cited countries that have provided alternative mobility facilities and improved road infrastructure to their populations. It was a political commitment to cycling as a low-cost mode of transport that subsequently reversed the auto-oriented environment. The redesigning of roads to include cycle and pedestrian paths was just one of the first steps. Cycling is now a part of everyday life in and between most cities in these countries.

Infrastructure that facilitates alternative mobility will have differing impacts depending on the time frame. In the short to medium term, safe and continuous non-motorized facilities connected to other modes such as public transportation will save millions of lives and provide significantly improved mobility, especially the urban poor. It will also prevent further congestion on city roads and degradation of air quality. In the

medium to long term, continued public awareness can help promote a significant shift from motorized to non-motorized transportation by addressing behavioral issues. Finally, environmental benefits will become more pronounced with lower demand for fossil fuels, significant reduction in green house gas emissions and better utilization of limited land in cities (UNEP, 2010).

**B5: Easily accessible public conveniences.**

When planning the urban design of public places or spaces, a city should include easily accessible public conveniences, or toilets for those with and without disabilities. Public conveniences are an important link between a city's public health and hospitality. Most crowded, urban built environments, particularly the pedestrian environments that society has created, are sometimes not sympathetic to the basic human function of needing a public convenience (Hanson, nd). Sometimes it is the built environment, how it is designed, planned, and constructed that can confront people with hazards and barriers, which make the environment inconvenient, uncomfortable, or unsafe. In extreme instances, it may even prevent some people from using it at all (Hanson, nd). Environmental design in public spaces should be guided by the generic needs of society, first, and then extend the parameters of design to create public places that capture the beauty of a space and the ingenuity of the designer.

**B6: Places throughout the town for people to sit down and rest.**

Another inherent issue with space design in today's society is the accessibility of places throughout a town for people to sit down and rest. In addition to a public health benefit from placing benches or some type of seating in public landscapes, it's also important to have resting areas to increase the social relations within a town or city. "People and places are increasingly interlinked through the organization of work, the



flows of goods and services and the exchange of ideas” (Perrons, 2004). However, with the advances in technology and human ingenuity, society has created for itself a division in the way we interact socially. It is when designers include more socially inclusive patterns of development; they have an immediate impact on people’s lives (Perrons, 2004). The space provided can be as simple as a bench or as large as a neighborhood park. Spaces like these can really bring individuals together to reflect individually or together as a community.

**B7: Customer friendly and uniform opening hours for all council offices.**

Local government and council offices in a city should be accessible to all individuals, residents, tourists, and visitors specifically during standardized local business hours. In the United States, local government planning agencies are open generally from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (regular business hours) in order to process requests and answer questions the public may have regarding the community.

**B8: Provision of a Public Relations service to answer media and other queries about the town.**

“Throughout the world, but especially in Western democracies, thousands and perhaps millions of men and women perform communication duties for organizations” (Grunig, 1992). The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) with the help of Mr. James E. Grunig defines public relations as communication activities of organizations and its publics, where major responsibilities of that public relations department is to publicize, promote, and manage media relations or marketing support (Grunig, 1992).

Ways in which cities can use public relations techniques include a variety of different mediums including face-to-face interaction within tourist information offices or the local chamber of commerce. These offices should be accessible to residents and

tourists interested in learning about the community. As well as the face-to-face interaction, public relations should promote city functions using web-based media. One of the more popular avenues is using social media to promote a community as well as provide answer to queries about the town. Contemporary web-based information is discussed further in criterion C6.

**B9: Provision of a customer response service to answer public queries about Cittaslow.**

Public relations or a customer response service should have available information for public queries regarding Cittaslow. This can be in the form of face to face interaction through a tourist information office, a website, link on a city's webpage, brochures, visitor's guide, or social media site. Using social media to spread information about Cittaslow will hopefully facilitate increased public interest as well as partnerships between cities in promoting the Cittaslow way of life.

**B10: Initiatives that encourage local businesses to open at times that coincide with local residents' needs.**

From an economic perspective, business hour regulation should typically be relative to the socially optimal business hour (Shy, Stenbacka, 2008). Local businesses should determine a standardization of business hours relative to the type of business. In other words, a restaurant that serves lunch and dinner wouldn't necessarily need to open early in the morning, however a local coffee shop may want to set earlier opening hours for those needing a kick-start before heading to their offices.

In an article written by Oz Shy and Rune Stenbacka, retail business hours were compared to price competition. Regulatory restrictions on business hours in the retail industry have created increased competition amongst local businesses (Shy, Stenbacka, 2008). Regardless of the flexibility of consumers to adjust their shopping to the

businesses hours, it was the businesses that felt the implications while trying to expand their business hours beyond the social optimum. Basically, local businesses in an attempt to compete with other businesses that held longer hours or opened earlier, lost revenue and in some extreme cases, lost their businesses.

Initiatives that encourage local businesses to open at times that coincide with local residents' needs is important, and from the study conducted by Oz Shy and Rune Stenbacka, it is also an important criteria for cities to follow in order to decrease competition between local businesses and inevitably decrease business turnover rates.

## **7.4 Urban Fabric**

### **C1: Plans to promote the maintenance, conservation and enhancement of historic areas, buildings and artifacts of cultural and local significance**

Cultural resources are the physical evidence of past activities and accomplishments of individuals and society. They relate to remains and sites associated with human activity (NRCS, nd). They can include prehistoric and historic districts, environments such as parks, buildings, structures, or objects. The United States Department of the Interior, for example, maintains a list of the National Register of Historic Places, where a database holds the records, artifacts, and physical remains associated with historical properties, as well as the above-mentioned resources (NPS, nd). Because resources in certain geographical locations can be so timeworn, they are more sensitive to human activities and development. Additionally, cultural resources are non-renewable (U.S. Department of the Interior, nd). When these resources are not protected, society loses that past information, which could benefit and solve modern-day problems. Preserving the cultural environment and the associated resources is important to protect the heritage of cultures for present and future generations and it is local, state, and federal

policies that provide support in safeguarding societies cultural resources. The policies should reflect the resource(s) and area of the resource, and should protect and enhance that cultural resource and their historic properties, in their original place to the fullest practical extent (NRCS, nd).

**C2: Policies to protect property and ensure the safety of the community.**

An important role of government, whether local, state, or federal, is the protection of people and property from natural and man-made hazards. The challenge of protecting the community in times of emergency requires a highly trained, organized, and dedicated staff that is able to respond to incidents at a moment's notice. Additionally, in an environment that values efficiency and a proactive approach to problem solving, the ability to properly prepare for emergencies is also critical for minimizing losses to life and property. It is important for a city's personnel to respond or adapt to changing conditions within a community.

Minimizing property damage, disaster costs, injury and deaths during emergencies is important for any city to enhance residents' sense of security, reduce expenditures and maintain a high quality of life.

**C3: Initiatives to encourage the use of recyclable or reusable crockery and cutlery in local establishments.**

Encouraging the use of recyclable or reusable crockery and cutlery in local establishments can begin at the grassroots level, but is most effective when responsibility is administered by local authorities (Harris, 2003). Local authorities should encourage initiatives that minimize any potential negative impacts food establishments may have on the environment, waste generation in particular. Additionally, these types of initiatives can be combined with the use of composting technologies, as mentioned in criteria A3 to further reduce any negative environmental impact the food industry may have on local municipalities. These initiatives should not be encouraged only at a small-scale level, in fact, where larger festivals, concerts, and sports events are frequently held, event industries would benefit by using recyclable or reusable crockery. Environmental aspects are traditionally well established through the use of public policy functions such as environmental health, land-use planning, transportation, and conservation. Developing initiatives or policies that encourage environmental protection provides the leadership and education needed to commit to more sustainable local establishments.

**C4: Policies to ensure effective litter and waste management including the provision of sympathetically designed litterbins.**

A city should provide litter and waste management not only at the residential level, but also within other zoned areas of a city, for example, a downtown commercial core. Effective litter and waste management should be available and accessible to all to promote a health and attractive community. Product design should also follow provisions of sympathetically designed litterbins where those with disabilities can dispose of litter and waste with ease.

**C5: Initiatives to plant environment enhancing plants in public and private gardens.**

This specific criterion, “environment-enhancing plants” can be best understood as native plant species. A native plant species is one that is indigenous to a given area. A non-native plant, in contrast, is one that has been introduced to a geographic area, deliberately or accidentally, and is not naturally found. The introduction of non-native plants to environments has caused ecological concern globally (Manchester, Bullock, 2000) where non-native species compete with native for resources through “predation, herbivory, and habitat alteration” (Manchester, Bullock, 2000). Another arena that has seen increase in populations of non-native species is in the urban environment. Plant species are imported and exported around the globe for the purposes of decoration and landscaping. While decorative non-native species may not be harming the environment directly, indirectly they are establishing a medium for designers to use any kind of plant they wish in public and private gardens. Initiatives to plant native species in public areas and private gardens can facilitate the education about native species and reintroduction into the community.

**C6: Provision and promotion of interactive websites where the public can communicate with the administrators of the town.**

Interactive websites are web pages where the user or visitor is able to communicate with the organization running the website. For example, a city website will have contact information whereby a citizen is able to contact their administrator by email. Once the email is sent, the administrator is able to reply directly to the citizen or within the web page the citizen questioned. Interactive websites also include those directed toward social media, which has had a staggering impact on the practice of public relations (Young, 2009).

Since its beginning, social media websites have taken a number of different forms including text, images, audio, professional networks, search engine marketing, video

sharing, and social networking. According to the International Association of Business Communicators (Young, 2009) more than half of all Internet users have joined a social network. Social networks have become the number one platform for creating and sharing content and nearly 75 percent of all Internet users have read one blog. Suffice it to say, as technology and media advance into the next century, so too should public relations in regards to publicizing information or frequently asked questions about their town.

In a study by Donald K. Wright and Michelle D. Hinson, the two take a look at the impact of social media on public relations practice. "...Public relations practitioners believed the emergence of blogs and social media have changed the way their organizations (or client organizations) communicate" (Wright, Hinson, 2009). However, further results in the study "...show that traditional news media receive higher scores than blogs and social media in terms of accuracy, credibility, telling the truth and being ethical" (Wright, Hinson, 2009). If these two could somehow be bridged (social media as a tool to convey information and more accurate or credible sources like those found in traditional news media), public relations service to answer media and other queries about the town would reflect the evolving trends of social media while maintaining the credibility of traditional news media.

#### **C7: Policies to promote eco-friendly architecture.**

Buildings are just one piece, added to the natural environment that creates an imbalance in the world's natural systems. Towards the end of the twentieth century, the word "sustainable" entered into the consciousness of architects and became an essential concern (Williamson, 2003a). Fortunately, many architects took responsibility to balance the natural and built environment wherever possible. This kind of development has led to the eco-friendly architecture concept. Policies that support eco-friendly architecture can

range from using local materials to building with recycled materials. It includes details such as the location of windows in order to utilize as much natural light as possible as well as decrease the amount of electricity used during daylight hours.

Agenda 21 has the goal to “halt and reverse the environmental damage to our planet and to promote environmental sound and sustainable development in all countries on Earth”. Agenda 21 moves the discussion of eco-friendly architecture to an actual plan of action whereby communities can implement specific measures centered on eight key objectives (UN Department of Economics and Social Affairs, nd) aimed at improving the social, economic, and environmental quality of human settlements within the natural environment.

**C8: Production of a Town Plan, Conservation Area Appraisal, Town Design Statement or similar to promote appreciation of historic centers and to make them user-friendly.**

A Town Plan is a document outlining what the community sees happening over the next few years. It is an opportunity for the whole community to voice their opinion on what action they wish to see taken in their local area (Conzen, 1960). It may include everything that is relevant to the people who live and work in the community, as well as issues of tourism, making historic centers or cultural remnants more accessible and user-friendly. It can include a variety of elements ranging from social, environmental, or economic topics (Conzen, 1960).

Every community is different, and it is up to the community to determine what is important to them and to work in partnership with local authorities and agencies, even service providers to produce a Town Plan that involves and includes everyone in the town, maps out services and facilities already in the community, determines if that number is currently meeting demand and address where they are not meeting full potential, sets out



an achievable and long term vision for the future as a realistic and achievable action plan, and informs or influences a large range of organizations who provide services to the communities.

A town plan is not a detailed regulatory document; rather it is a vision and policy statement that articulates the needs and aspirations of the community. The Town Plan provides a framework for achieving those aspirations and is intended as a guide. The town may address such diverse community issues such as land development, municipal services and facilities, environmental protection, economic development, transportation, and sustainability.

In the United States, a Town Plan is similar to a General Plan. “Simply put, the [general] plan is an elegant attempt to publicly propose a ‘What if?’ – to stimulate through and elicit [public] comment” (Baer, 1997). All cities are required to adopt and amend the general plan subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, 2010). Most cities within the United States will fit this criterion.

## **7.5 Local Produce and Product**

### **D1: Maintenance of an up to date register of locally produced goods and producers within the natural hinterland of the town.**

A register, as it relates to this criterion, is a list of businesses and their produced goods within a community. The registry should be searchable and inform consumers that locally grown food is available in their area and when and where producers may be selling at the next farmers' market. Marketing efforts that spread the existence of such a registry may increase the amount of locally produced goods sold at farmers' markets as well as increase local knowledge of natural and organic foods sold in the area.

A more popular method evolving in today's fast paced world is using an Internet based search engine (i.e. Yelp or Google). By choosing a category (restaurant) and location (city) a person is able to navigate to a baker's shop or Italian restaurant that meets specific input criteria. But because not all food and drink sector businesses are included in these search engines (more often most natural foods or local producers only sell products at farmers' markets), it is important for a local agency to maintain a register of what's available to educate consumers on available locally produced goods and their producers, a city should maintain an up to date registry within the town.

### **D2: Organization of events and training to raise public awareness and appreciation of local cultural and artistic traditions and skills.**

Local cultural and artistic traditions and skills have decreased in a globalized economy (Saha, 2005). "by the mid-1990s...many cultural observers around the world believed that local, regional, even national, traditions were devalued or endangered or both" (Kurin, 2003). Through the organization of events, local cultural and artistic traditions and skills may combine the intellectual and organizational efforts necessary to redevelop the "intangible cultural heritage" (Kurin, 2003) in a city. Raising local

knowledge of local culture and traditions and applying it to contemporary life in a wise and sustainable way may produce economic benefits for both the artisan and the city through tourist opportunities. Events and training help make these cultures and traditions visible and raise public awareness, but it is the artisan that enlivens lost or almost forgotten cultural forms – such as stories, local knowledge, art, music, dance, social practices, rituals or festive events (Kurin, 2003) – that should be encouraged in order to preserve cultural heritage.

### **D3: Policies to encourage and provide space for farmers and organic markets.**

Farmers' markets continue to rise in popularity as consumer demand for obtaining fresh products directly from the farm increases; as a result, farmers' markets have become an increasing visible part in the urban life (Wolf, et al. 2005). Farmers' markets operate with the goal of providing opportunities for farms to sell their fresh produce directly to consumers. Farmers' markets provide a vital source of revenue for many farmers.

“Farmers' markets afford intensive, periodic opportunities for vendors to interact directly with their customers and with other farmers' market vendors. While such interactions are often social and greatly valued as such, they can also generate and circulate knowledge vendors might use to develop new products and creative ways of marketing them”

(Hinrichs, et al, 2004). Despite the increases in numbers and popularity, farmers' markets represent a very small portion of the agricultural industry's sales (Wolf, et al. 2005).

Municipalities, farmers' market organizers, and community supporters, can plan and design policies to encourage and provide space for farmers' markets in a city. These physical spaces will provide climates where opportunities for mutual social learning are encouraged (Hinrichs, et al, 2004). The social learning will raise public awareness of local fresh produce available as well as circulate knowledge between vendors.

**D4: Policies to increase awareness of good food and nutrition.**

In the United States alone, obesity has become an epidemic where two out of three adults are overweight due to poor eating habits (Roberts, 2003). If we are what we eat, Americans are eating simply, fatty, overweight foods. Populations in the United States have been increasing, and in parallel so have food processing technologies and distribution methods. We are getting more food more places, and faster at the cost of food quality. Policies to increase awareness of good food and nutrition has been on the up and up, but further agricultural policies to control the production, processing, distribution, and promotion, sales, and consumption of food must be sought in order to save the quality of our food. Local policy, fortunately, can begin this battle. Policies that link agriculture and nutrition to promote nourishment, health, and sustainability (Roberts, 2003) are at the forefront. Policymakers can use the educational system as one method of increasing awareness of good food and nutrition (refer to criteria D5).

**D5: Educational programs to encourage and support organic, traditional and sustainable farming.**

Using educational programs to encourage and support organic, traditional and sustainable farming promotes the local economy as well as facilitates a learning avenue for children to understand how their food is produced, processed, and distributed. Educational programs promote the local economy by buying produce directly from the local farmer – other popular methods include field trips to the local farm or guest speakers in classrooms (Roberts, 2003). Farmers can spread the word on humanely raising animals in their natural habitat while protecting the environment as well as the importance of diversifying and growing a variety of healthy vegetables and/or grains for using sustainable agricultural practices.

**D6: Policies to preserve and support unique local foodstuffs.**

“Foodstuff” is a substance suitable for consumption as food (Slow Food, nd).

Unique local foodstuffs can best relate to the Slow Food way of life. Its mission is to reconnect cultures with the people, traditions, plants, animals, fertile soils, and waters that produce our food. It also works to inspire a transformation in food policy, production practices, and market forces so that they ensure equity, sustainability, and pleasure in the food we eat. Local policies that preserve and support this kind of practice are important to foster the development of sustainable foods, farming, and nutrition, as described in criteria D3 – D5.

**D7: Policies to encourage organic farming and the independent quality certification of produce and products.**

“According to the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), there are currently an estimated two million certified organic farmers worldwide, 80 percent of which are in developing countries” (UN News Centre, 2012). The UN conference discussed policies to encourage organic farming in developing countries as being labeled “organic” fetches higher income for those farming and creates opportunity for international trade. In the United States, organic production began in the late 1940s and has evolved into more than 40 private organizations and state agencies that certify organic food (EPA, nd). Policies to encourage organic farming nationally are marketed by the National Organic Program (NOP) within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The NOP mission is to develop and implement national standards that govern the marketing of agricultural products organically produced, to facilitate commerce of food that is organically produced, and to assure consumers that such products meet consistent standards (EPA, nd). There are, however, “minor differences in organic standards...which can often hinder trade” (UN News Centre, 2012) between international

markets and developing countries. At the local level, policies should support local organic farmers. At the national level, the USDA should work with UNCTAD to create bridges between organic farming in developing countries with those in the United States.

#### **D8: Initiatives to create awareness of traditional foodstuffs.**

Initiatives should revolve around local knowledge of traditional foodstuffs. Align food policies and practices with available educational programs to promote healthy communities aware of traditional foodstuffs. Food suppliers, local farmers, and community-based organizations, as well as local government can increase the understanding of where food comes from, how it was produced and by whom. Society can learn how to combine pleasure and responsibility in daily choices and appreciate the cultural and social importance of food. Current initiatives (Slow Food, nd) educating the public on traditions and cultures of food are:

*Ark of Taste* – A project to rediscover, catalog, describe and publicize forgotten foods. Today, the international list includes 1,000 products from more than 50 countries that are endangered by industrial agriculture, environmental degradation and standardization.

*Convivium* – A local Slow Food chapter. Organizes a number of events each year, ranging from simple dinners and tastings, to visits to local producers and farms, conferences, and discussions. The Convivium works to get to know local foods and producers and to educate others about them.

*Earth Markets* – Farmers' markets that have been established according to guidelines that follow the Slow Food philosophy. Community-run where local producers offer healthy, quality food directly to consumers at fair prices and guarantee environmentally sustainable methods.

*Presidium* – Projects run by Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity to directly help artisanal food producers.

*Terra Madre* – Launched in 2004 by Slow Food, to bring together people who wish to preserve and promote sustainable methods of food production that respects nature, traditions, and communities.

#### **D9: Policies to protect and support goods and produce that represent local traditions.**

In addition to criterion D8, policies to protect and support goods and produce that represent local traditions reflects the Slow Food philosophy where “everyone has a fundamental right to the pleasure of good food and consequently the responsibility to protect the heritage of food, tradition and culture that make this pleasure possible” (Slow Food, nd).

## **7.6 Hospitality and Community Goals**

### **E1: Commitment to develop a local Slow Food convivium.**

Slow Food is a global, grassroots organization with supporters in over 150 countries around the world (Slow Food, nd). Developing a local Slow Food convivium in a community translates to linking the pleasure of good food with a commitment to the community and environment. A philosophy where cities counter the rise of fast living, disappearance of local food traditions, interest in where food comes from and how food choices affect the rest of the world (Slow Food, nd). Commitment to small-scale and sustainable production of quality foods leads a community toward the pleasure of good food and the responsibility to protect the heritage of food, tradition, and culture.

**E2: Provision of multi-lingual signposting and visitor information.**

Cross-cultural communication in signage and visitor information is an essential part of creating hospitality across differing cultures. In November 2000, the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service was funded to undertake research, which would identify most helpful resources in representing cross-cultural communication. The communication tools that emerged as a result of the search can be broadly divided into the categories of multilingual signs, universal symbols, and pictograms (NSW Health Department, 2001).

**E3: Provision of customer service training for all those providing services to visitors.**

Customer service training is important so that those representing visitors, tourists, and residents interested in Cittaslow can answer a range of questions. Practices and procedures should be provided to all employees to provide services to all members of society. Social interaction may come easily to some customer service representatives, but they must also understand and be able to communicate effectively the mission and vision of Cittaslow.

**E4: Development and maintenance of well-marked tourist routes with interpretation and information.**

The development and maintenance of well-marked tourist routes provide nature-oriented recreational opportunities such as hiking; promote public appreciation and understanding of a surrounding area including natural features and its cultural heritage.

**E5: Production of printed guides about Cittaslow in the town.**

This kind of initiative will help tourists and visitors in a city learn about the philosophy of Cittaslow, as well as provide local business information for those businesses that support and are a part of the slow way of life.

**E6: Promotion of a wide cross section of social events, sports clubs and volunteering**



**opportunities for the whole community.**

Opportunities such as social events, sports clubs and volunteering can have many positive impacts on a community. While most impacts are in the form of economic benefits, there are also social, physical, environmental, and tourist benefits (Kreag, 2001). Events can affect people and the community in different ways, but overall provide a place of increased visitation by tourists or visitors, and develop increased social interactions, traditions, community values and interests of local residents.

**E7: Provision of managed car parks in areas offering easy access to the town centre.**

To meet the needs of residents, commuters, businesses, and visitors, cities may find unique opportunities to cluster managed car parks in close proximity to pedestrian oriented uses (Weinberger, et al, 2010). Car parks can improve the economic vitality of a town and if designed properly can create a more attractive town centre (Weinberger, et al, 2010). Car parks can be located so they serve a variety of uses including retail, commercial/business, transport hubs such as railway stations or bus stations, and leisure and tourism. Car parks can also alleviate clustered street parking in surrounding neighborhoods nearby to busy retail or commercial businesses.

**E8: Promotion of special local events to encourage local people to enjoy local facilities and participate fully in community life.**

Special local events can include a range of activities including but not limited to festivals and markets. A local event with community participation creates a sense of social cohesion and also produces a foundation for community pride. In Castroville, California, the cities pride is partially built around the annual Artichoke Festival. Every year hundreds of residents, visitors, and tourists gather to taste the local produce (namely artichokes) and participate in the multitude of activities (Castroville Artichoke Festival, nd).

### **E9: Promotion of local initiatives that link into Cittaslow goals and principles.**

Should a city decide to follow Cittaslow goals and principles, criteria should be apparent in local regulations and guidelines. In the United States, this can be provided at the small-scale level (neighborhood or specific plans) or larger (general plans, master plans). The value of this kind of promotion reflects congruency with the Cittaslow Charter and the principles and vision of the community applying for Cittaslow membership.

## **7.7 Cittaslow Awareness Goals**

The following Cittaslow Awareness Goals are identified, however, are not included within these measurements as the goals are only required of cities who are presently members of the Cittaslow Charter.

F1: Maintenance of a Directory of local organisations contributing to the aims and objectives of Cittaslow.

F2: Display of the Cittaslow logo in public places and on official documents.

F3: Promotion of the movement's aims and objectives to local residents and visitors.

F4: Maintenance of a website that illustrates how Cittaslow themes are applied in the town.

F5: Promotion of family life and healthy living for all age groups.

F6: Provision of monitoring systems and budgets to enhance the town's score against the Cittaslow membership goals.

F7: Collation of media coverage relating to Cittaslow in the town.

F8: Initiatives to involve local businesses, organisations and opinion formers in promoting Cittaslow and enhancing the town's performance against the membership goals.

F9: Policies to encourage schools, hospitals, community facilities and local businesses to use local produce, products and services.

## **8. Case Study: San Luis Obispo, California**

### **8.1 A Brief History**

As far back as 1585, two groups of Native Americans inhabited the San Luis Obispo region (City of San Luis Obispo, nd). The Salinan and the Chumash tribe lived north of the Cuesta Grade and south of the Grade along the coast, respectively (City of San Luis Obispo, nd). It is said that as far back as 1587, European explorers made their way to the San Luis Obispo region, but it wasn't until 1769 that any kind of European influence was made.

In 1769, Gaspar de Portola and the Franciscan Father of Crespi travelled through California establishing missions in areas that seemed most suitable. It was Franciscan Father Junipero Serra who remembered travelling through San Luis Obispo and made the decision to develop the fifth Californian mission, Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa; it was completed in 1772 (SLO Museum of History Interview, 2012). The Mission would help locals with activities ranging from town development to agriculture and cattle ranches; it would come to be known as the "Birthplace of the City" (SLO Museum of History Interview, 2012). Following the Mexican War of Independence, Mexico had control of California, and the government wanted secularization of the missions in order to obtain the land the missions owned, nearly one-half million acres (City of San Luis Obispo, nd) were distributed to Mexican citizens. The Mission saw its uses switch from religious to multipurpose; where some rooms were used as the jail and others as county offices. A man by the name of John C. Fremont took San Luis Obispo for the United States in 1846 at which point a shift in economic emphasis from cattle ranches and agriculture led to gold mining (City of San Luis Obispo, nd).

It is said the City fell into a sense of “lawlessness” during the Gold Rush era (SLO Museum of History Interview, 2012). A Committee of Vigilance led by Walter Murray and formed to end the violence in the area brought a reduction in the number of crimes, but it was a drought in the 1860s that forced many individuals to sell their property to family names still well-known in the area today (City of San Luis Obispo, nd). The economic prosperity San Luis Obispo had appreciated up until this point continued as San Luis Obispo transformed the “hide- and –tallow industry” into a beef and dairy cattle production capitol (SLO Museum of History Interview, 2012).

The town, as well as the beef and dairy production thrived. New buildings were being put up around the town, and an important aspect of the development was that most buildings were made from local materials (City of San Luis Obispo, nd). Clapboards, sandstone, granite, and brick were used most often (SLO Museum of History Interview, 2012). Landings or wharfs were placed in Avila, Cayucos, and San Simeon to expedite the exporting of goods from around the County and the City.

Captain Harford began construction of Pacific Coast Railway in 1872, rumors of Southern Coast Railway coming closer to the City of San Luis Obispo sparked a land boom in the 1880s. The discovery of gold in La Panza district (eastern part of the County) brought an even greater land boom and populations to the City. It wasn’t until 1894 that the Southern Pacific Railway connected from San Jose to San Luis Obispo and the prosperity of the City continued with the opening of California Polytechnic School in 1901 (City of San Luis Obispo, nd).

During World War I, agricultural production switched to Navy Beans, which was subsidized by the War Relief Administration (City of San Luis Obispo, nd). When the

war was over, there was an increase in dairy, seed, and truck farming. Hollywood also began to notice San Luis Obispo and filmed movies such as *The Ten Commandments* and *The Sheik* (City of San Luis Obispo, nd). However, tragedy struck the City in 1920 when the Mission burned. It was Father Daniel Keenan who established the community celebration “La Fiesta de las Flores” to raise money to support the retrofit of the Mission (SLO Museum of History Interview, 2012), a city tradition until 1995.

The Great Depression, affected some parts of the County, but the City generally was shielded because of agricultural production. The county subsequently benefited from Depression-era federal programs such as the Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps and because of this was able to invest in a new Courthouse for the City, flood-control projects across the county, and highway improvements (City of San Luis Obispo, nd). Additionally, one of the most memorable photographs taken during the Depression, named *Migrant Mother*, was taken in the City of San Luis Obispo (City of San Luis Obispo, nd).

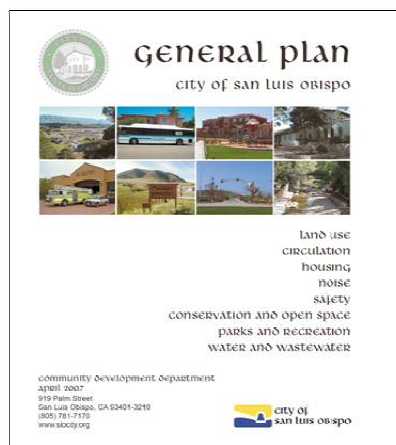
The United States War Department, around the time of World War II, began to take notice of San Luis Obispo County’s transportation links and open land areas. Training camps were brought to the area and even after World War II helped maintain an economic boom in the early 1950s (City of San Luis Obispo, nd). But with more growth came the need for increased water supplies. The Santa Margarita, Nacimiento, San Antonio, and Lopez Dams solved this issue as tourism began to take form as one of the County’s major sources of revenue (City of San Luis Obispo, nd).

Tourist attractions included clam digging in the Pismo Beach area, Hearst Castle as a State Park, and a surge in the number of local wineries. In the 1960s, children from

local schools in an act of defiance began to place gum on an alley wall (SLO Museum of History Interview, 2012), which caught on as a popular tourist attraction. Student enrollment and popularity at San Luis Obispo’s local college created a pathway for the school to become a part of the Statewide University System in 1972 (California Polytechnic State University; City of San Luis Obispo, nd).

For a list of historical sites and buildings in the City of San Luis Obispo, please refer to Appendix A. The San Luis Obispo Museum of History archives as well as the San Luis Obispo County Bicycle Coalition provided the names and locations of some of the historical resources in San Luis Obispo.

## 8.2 Existing SLO Programs and Regulations



The City’s General Plan is a guide used to protect various resources in the community as well as meet community purposes or goals. It reflects a wide diversity of citizens’ preferences, within a framework set by State law (OPR Guidelines, 2003). “Each city and county in California must prepare a

comprehensive, long term general plan to guide its future” (OPR Guidelines, 2003). The City uses its General Plan as a blueprint, publishing separately adopted sections, called elements, which address various topics. These topics fulfill or partially relate to the Cittaslow criteria.

### 8.2.1 Environmental Goals

**A1: Apparatus to test air quality and report on conditions.**

The City is located in an air basin that continues to be designated as a State non-attainment area for fine particulate matter (PM10) air pollution (General Plan 6.2, 2006). The City established a number of policies within the *Conservation and Open Space Element* within the General Plan that seeks to reduce those toxic emissions. The City's goal is to "achieve and maintain air quality that supports health and enjoyment for those who live or work in the City and for visitors" (General Plan 6.2.1, 2006) followed by policies which seek to minimize atmospheric change or contribute toward climate change, maintain state and federal standards for air quality to protect human health, reduce dependency of motor vehicles by encouraging walking, bicycling, and public transit use, and finally become a model city. As a model city, San Luis Obispo will manage to be as pollution free as possible. The City will work with other agencies and organizations to help educate citizens in ways to prevent a decline in air quality.

To achieve these policies, the City will employ best available practices in all City operations. Section 2.3.1 of the 2006 COSE states that "best available practices means behavior and technologies that produce the least air pollutants for a desired outcome, considering available equipment, life-city costs, social and environmental side effects and



District for

the regulations of other agencies" (General Plan 6.2.3.1, 2006).

The Air Pollution Control District (APCD)

is one of the agencies the City currently works with to employ best available practices. The City and the APCD work together to implement the County Clean Air Plan. The County Clean Air Plan requires the City to monitor and test air quality, annually, where conditions are

added to and reported in the County Annual Air Quality Report. Finally, in an effort to curb air pollutants based on air quality monitoring reports, the City implements alternative transportation and land use design strategies to reduce the number of single-occupant trips in fossil-fueled vehicles. One example includes incentives to increase ridership of public transportation. Students attending Cal Poly San Luis Obispo or Cuesta College are able to ride public transit free of charge while actively enrolled at either educational facility.

**A2: Policies to maintain the quality of water supplies and ensure pollution free water in rivers and waterways.**

San Luis Obispo's aquatic ecosystems consist of creeks, Laguna Lake, floodplains, marshes, wetlands, serpentine seeps, and springs. These ecosystems provide habitat, recreation, water purification, groundwater recharge, and soil production as well as natural flood protection. The City's Land Use (LU) and COSE elements identify objectives, goals, policies, and programs that seek to protect these natural assets and protect the community's quality of life.

The City identifies protection as involving both the integrity of the resource being viewed, and lines of sight to the resource (General Plan 6.2, 2006). Water is one resource the City views as a component of a sustainable community. The City aims to maintain water quality standards by acknowledging the relationship between urban water demand and supply and continuing to conserve resources for future generations.

The City's overarching goal in regards to water quality works to meet need without harm to natural communities or productive agriculture (General Plan 6.10, 2006). Additionally, the City identifies a regional network consisting of creeks, wetlands, and Laguna Lake, connecting parks, open space, and trails which must be protected to respect



the natural environment during development (General Plan 6.4, 2006). Policies to reinforce this goal include water use planning through “efficient available practices” (General Plan 6.10.1.1, 2006) where those areas of the city already impacted by urban development may be appropriate for multiple uses whereas creeks and lakeshore in a more natural state shall be managed for maximized ecological value (General Plan 6.4.1P, 2006). In other words, the City will use the least water for a desired outcome that meets community need and conserves ecological value and quality where feasible. This is supported by a second goal that aims to maintain the water quality from which usage stems. The City will protect and maintain water quality in aquifers, natural water bodies (Laguna Lake), streams and wetlands that support all beneficial uses including agriculture or natural habitats (General Plan 6.10.1.3, 2006).

Water quality is maintained through the guidance of best practices and the Ahwahnee Water Principles (General Plan 6.10.2.2, 2006). The Ahwahnee Water Principles encourage community design that is compact, walkable, and transit-oriented so that automobile-generated urban runoff pollutants are minimized. Natural resources, such as rivers and waterways (wetlands, flood plains, recharge zones) are identified, preserved and restored as valued assets for water quality improvement, groundwater recharge, habitat, and overall long-term water resource sustainability (General Plan 6.10.2.2B, 2006).

Programs to implement the Ahwahnee Water Principles include efficient water usage and maintaining water quality. A high level of water quality will be reflected in design and operation of current water supply, treatment, and distribution system (General Plan 6.10.3.2.A, 2006). The City will take careful consideration in the design, construction, and maintenance of parks, buildings and grounds, storm water facilities and

parking to prevent adverse effects on water quality in its natural setting. Impacts may come from point sources (known source location) such as petroleum or non-point sources (unknown source location) such as fertilizers, pesticides, litter, and vehicle residues. To protect creeks and waterways, the City participates with the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRWQCB) to establish a program of baseline water quality testing for City creeks, similar to the County's Annual Air Quality Report (General Plan 6.10.3.2, 2006).

**A3: Plans for the implementation of new composting technology and the promotion of home composting.**

The City of San Luis Obispo encourages residents and businesses to pursue backyard composting as a means to address emissions associated with solid waste. For residents and businesses to implement composting technologies and use home composting, the City has provided a "backyard-composting guide" (CAP, 2011) on the City's webpage. One of the City's waste strategies is to increase the amount of diverted waste by aiding businesses in the development of efficient recycling and composting systems (WST 1.11; CAP, 2011). The program provides a compost bin for backyard use at a discounted price to households and businesses that pursue composting. Businesses that sell prepared food will be required to utilize compostable, biodegradable, or recyclable food service ware (CAP, 2011).

**A4: Mechanisms to measure light pollution and action plans to reduce it.**

The City establishes a Night-Sky Preservation ordinance within the COSE 9.1.6. The City will adopt an ordinance to preserve nighttime views, prevent light pollution, and to protect public safety by establishing street and public area lighting standards (General Plan 6.9.1.6, 2006). Additionally, outdoor lighting will be managed to avoid light levels,

timing, unnecessary locations, spillage to areas not needing or wanting illumination, glare, and frequencies that interfere with astronomical viewing (General Plan 6.9.2.3, 2006).

#### **A5: Incentives to encourage the use of alternative energy sources.**

“One of the best things we can do for our environmental and economic well-being is to use energy more efficiently and shift to cleaner, renewable, locally controlled energy sources” (General Plan 6.4, 2006). Emerging technologies and increased sustainable practices through building design in both public and private development has made San Luis Obispo a leader in energy conservation.



Figure 13: Renewable Energy Logo San Luis Obispo Climate Action Plan (CAP, 2011)

City buildings and facilities are operated in the most energy-efficient manner without endangering public health and safety and without reducing public safety or service levels. Best available practices used and considered by the City for further progress in energy conservation are summarized in Table 1.

<b>Supply Side (production)</b>	<b>Demand Side (delivery and use)</b>	<b>Combination at site (integrated system)</b>
1. Solar thermal electric: conversion of sunlight to electricity through an intermediate generator using a pressure differential	1. Conservation	1. Space conditioning through passive heating and cooling: simultaneous utilization of solar access, central night ventilation, use of thermal mass and efficient building envelope.
2. Wind electricity generator: without substantial harm to wildlife	2. Hydrogen: conversion of any sustainable source to an intermediate fuel, such as hydrogen produced by solar-powered electrolysis	2. Illumination by natural light.
3. Solar photovoltaic: feeding the power grid.		3. Natural ventilation
4. Biomass: conversion of plant material to fuel, or to electricity through combustion, in a		4. Solar voltaic: conversion of sunlight directly to electricity, preferred form is structure

sustained-yield cycle and with emission controls to protect air quality.	surfaces at or near the place of use.
5. Tidal Wave or thermocline power: electrical generation from the ocean's tidal or wave action, or difference in temperature due to depth, without substantial harm to plants or wildlife.	5. Solar water heating: water heating by converting solar to thermal energy through roof- or ground-mounted collectors, generally at the place of use.
6. Geothermal: a) preferred from: deep heat sources not dependent on release of brine b) secondary form: near-surfaces sources require release of brine.	
7. Hydropower: electrical generation from falling water, without substantial harm to wildlife, and where reservoir siltation will not eliminate the resource.	

Table 1: Sustainable Energy Sources (City of San Luis Obispo General Plan 2006 COSE 4.0 Table 1)

Aside from those mentioned above, the City continues to identify energy efficiency improvement measures and promote the use of cost effective, renewable, non-depleting energy sources in both new and existing construction projects and buildings. This task is performed through the cooperation with Federal, State, and local governments and other appropriate entities. One example is San Luis Obispo's encouragement of "green building" standards as certified by the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Program (General Plan 6.4.3.6, 2006). Incentives for innovative, environmentally friendly (also known as "green" or "sustainable") development and building projects are given which can include such incentives as density bonuses, setback variations, modified street standards, or reduced parking standards (General Plan 6.4.6.14, 2006).

The following programs support energy sustainability in the City, efficient city energy use, including purchase and use of vehicles, equipment, and materials, retrofit facilities for energy savings as funding allows, financial assistance for energy efficiency

improvements through the involvement of state and federal budget appropriations, grants, and opportunities. The City will monitor energy usage and prepare a report similar to the Annual Air Quality Report and Water Quality Report. The report will act as an energy plan whose goal will be to reduce the use of non-renewable resources and increase the use of renewable resources in City services and facilities. Businesses and residences will also be encouraged to promote technology and energy conservation by promoting the use of technology such as solar power (General Plan 6.4.6, 2006).

**A6: Mechanisms to measure electromagnetic pollution and action plans to reduce it.**



Figure 14: Powerlines are one source of Electromagnetic Pollution

The City of San Luis Obispo has recognized the California Department of Health Services recommendation that “until information is available to make better-informed decisions about possible health effects due to long-term EMF exposure, people and local governments should consider keeping schools, dwellings, and workplaces away from high-voltage power transmission lines” (General Plan 5.5, 2006). Land use decisions are then formed based on avoiding prolonged exposure of people to strong EMF.

San Luis Obispo has identified some areas of land containing major sources of EMF (see Figure 4), and applied specific uses for areas under or next to the high-voltage transmission lines; agriculture, floodwater detention, roads, parking, materials storage, and parks and greenways with low-intensity use. When land is subdivided by transmission lines, the City will determine if a condition will be imposed requiring notification of prospective buyers that a source of EMF exists and that studies have raised concerns about long-term exposure.

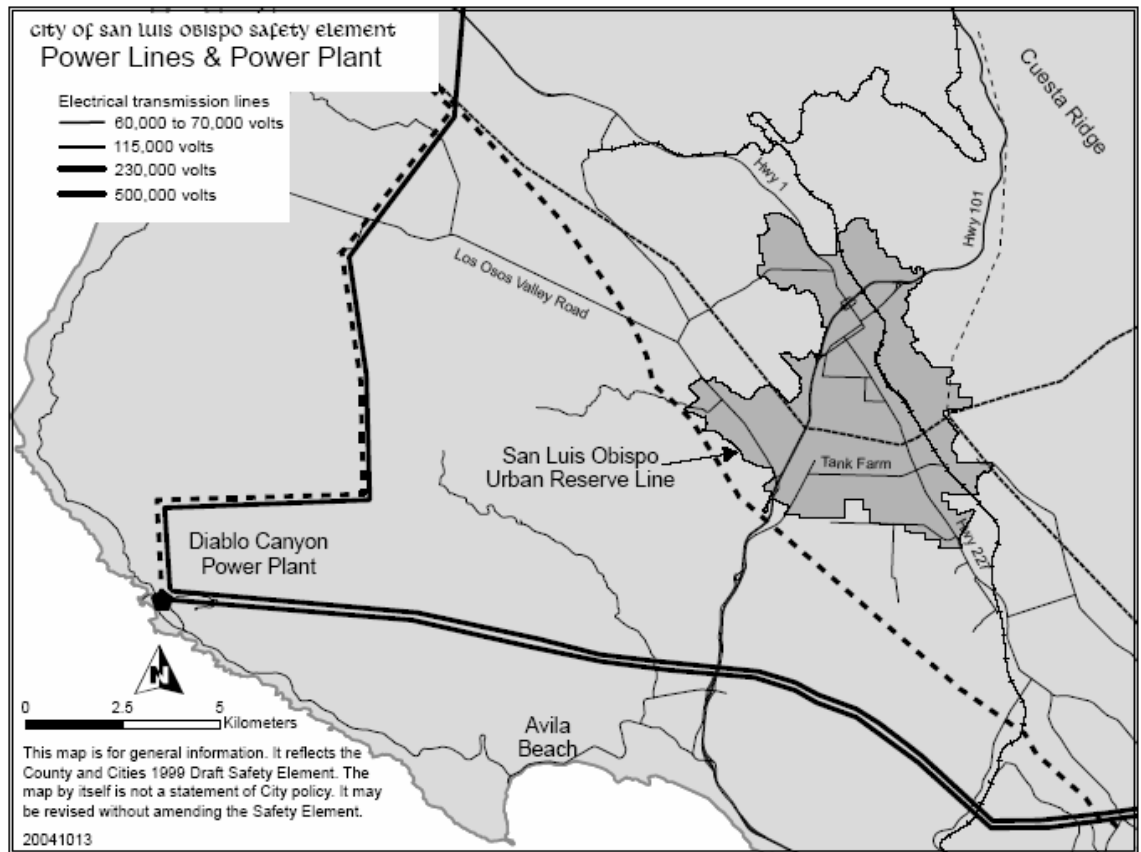


Figure 15: City of San Luis Obispo Power Lines & Power Plant Locations (City of San Luis Obispo General Plan 2006 COSE 5.5)

## A7: Apparatus to measure noise pollution and policies to reduce it.

California State law requires the City to adopt a noise element that assesses noise sources and noise exposure, and which aims to minimize noise conflicts (General Plan 4.1.0, 2006). The Noise Element of the General Plan for San Luis Obispo sets noise exposure standards for noise-sensitive land uses, and performance standards for new commercial and industrial uses. A companion document, the Noise Guidebook, contains guidelines for those involved in land use choices, and in project design and review, with methods for reducing noise exposure in relatively simple situations (General Plan 4.1.0, 2006). Acceptability levels for uses in the City are illustrated in Figure 1.

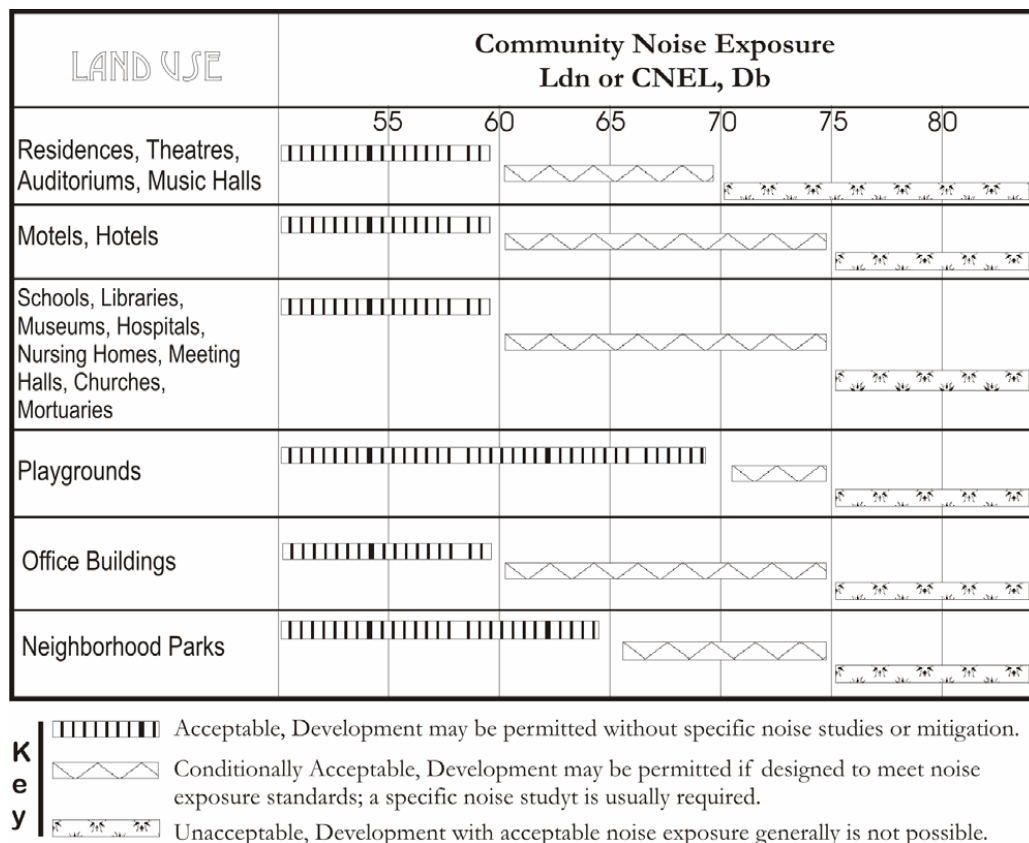


Figure 16: Noise Acceptability Levels (Brown- Buntin Associates, modified from State of California's Guidelines for the Preparation and Content of the Noise Element of the General Plan)

Policies and programs to minimize noise from land use and transportation sources are included within the Noise Element as well as mitigation approaches to minimize noise sources. The policies and programs focus on preventing noise-related land use conflicts by requiring that new development be reviewed to determine whether it complies with the policies. Where a project may expose people to existing noise levels or projected built-out noise levels exceeding acceptable limits, the City requires noise studies (General Plan 4.1.13, 2006) and continued monitoring (General Plan 4.1.15, 2006) to ensure compliance with required noise mitigation measures.

**A8: Policies to eliminate advertising and signage clutter.**

“The cumulative effect of numerous signs close to each other has a detrimental impact which can not be addressed in any way other than by limiting the number and size of all signs” (Sign Regulations 15.40.110, 2004). On October 7, 2004, the City of San Luis Obispo adopted the “Sign Regulations” chapter within the City’s Zoning Ordinance, Article 1 Chapter 15.40.100. The overall intent and purpose is to protect and enhance the character of the community and its various neighborhoods and districts against “visual blight”. The size, type, and location of signs are regulated by the City to encourage the effective use of signs as a means of communication and to provide equality and equity among sign owners who wish to use them. The ordinance requires signs to adhere to a design component that is architecturally compatible with affected structures and the character of the surrounding development in order to maintain the quality of a district or neighborhood.

The Sign Regulations chapter of the City’s Zoning Ordinance applies to all property and land within the jurisdiction of San Luis Obispo. Additionally, this chapter



regulates the time, place, and manner under which signs are permitted, and not the content of signage (Sign Regulations 15.40.110, 2004).

#### **A9: Application of a formal Environmental Management System.**

An environmental management system serves as a tool to improve environmental performance within a community (EPA, nd). It also addresses immediate and long-term impacts of processes such as development on the environment and gives guidance for addressing environmental concerns in a community (EPA, nd). This kind of process is similar to processes and guidance required under California's Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, 2010).

CEQA is a statute that requires state and local agencies to identify the significant environmental impacts of their actions and to avoid or mitigate those impacts, where feasible through the preparation of an Initial Study, Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Most proposals for physical development in California are subject to the provisions of CEQA, whereby the project will require some environmental review in order to determine the long-term impacts of development on the surrounding environment. A General Plan is subject to CEQA. It is subject to CEQA because a General Plan may cause either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect change in the environment. For example, the City wants to reduce air pollution by encouraging alternative modes of transportation such as walking and bicycling. This change may cause a foreseeable change in air quality, whether the change is beneficial or harmful, if substantial evidence is shown that a project may have significant effect on the environment, an EIR must be completed. The City completed an EIR in order to identify any significant environmental impacts caused by General Plan actions. Each element was addressed in the EIR in order to determine

whether certain activities or programs encouraged by the City would impact the environment.

**A10: Participation in and support for local Agenda 21 projects.**

San Luis Obispo is not currently participating or supporting local Agenda 21 projects. However, the objectives of Agenda 21 are similar to the City's sustainable development initiatives and local cultural goals and objectives. The City's General Plan identifies the importance of its cultural heritage within the COSE chapter, detailing goals and policies dealing with the preservation of historical and architectural resources, encouraging community understanding, appreciation and support for the local resources, and ensuring long-term protection of those cultural resources (General Plan 6.3.2, 2006). Programs to protect cultural resources from development include financial assistance and incentives, careful restorative efforts and preservation by the Cultural Heritage Committee, and review of new development to determine consistency with cultural resource preservation guidelines and standards (General Plan 6.3.6, 2006). Sustainable development initiatives are reflected in the policies and programs of all elements in the General Plan through energy efficiency, efficient use of local materials (General Plan 6.5.0, 2006), preserving and enhancing natural communities, preserving open space and view sheds, and applying growth management strategies for development capacity and services.

## **8.2.2 Infrastructure Goals**

### **B1: Existence of well-maintained public green spaces.**

As of 2011, there are 21 designated parks within the City (Figure 3), totalling 158 acres of park landscape and 82 acres of turf. The General Plan discusses Parks and Recreation as an existing balanced recreational system (General Plan 7.1.0, 2006). The City's vision is to continue enhancing the network of trails connecting open space to developed areas. Additionally, city residents have influenced the City to provide pedestrian and bicycle trail links between parks, recreation facilities, recreation activities, and open space. The City discusses within this element the importance of maintaining a balance between continued renovation and improvement of existing parks, facilities, recreational activities, and open space. "It is the City's guiding philosophy that all city residents, regardless of interest, ability, and needs shall have the opportunity to help shape and participate in City recreation programs" (General Plan 7.1.0, 2006).

Coupled with the Parks and Recreation element of the General Plan is a supplemental Master Plan which evaluates current and future parks and recreation needs (General Plan 7.1.1, 2006). The Master Plan identifies recreational goals, policies and programs and establishes short and long-range implementation and funding mechanisms to ensure facilities and programs keep pace with the needs of the community.

The Parks and Recreation element identify and describe all existing facilities in the City. Facilities include mini-parks, neighbourhood parks, community parks, joint use sites (such as school playgrounds), non-joint use sites, recreation centers and special facilities, including: Jack House, Swim Center, Senior Center, Recreation Center, Golf Course, historic adobes, and community gardens. "Most parks have been renovated in

the last five years with an emphasis on more visually appealing and safe playgrounds” (General Plan 7.3.0, 2006).

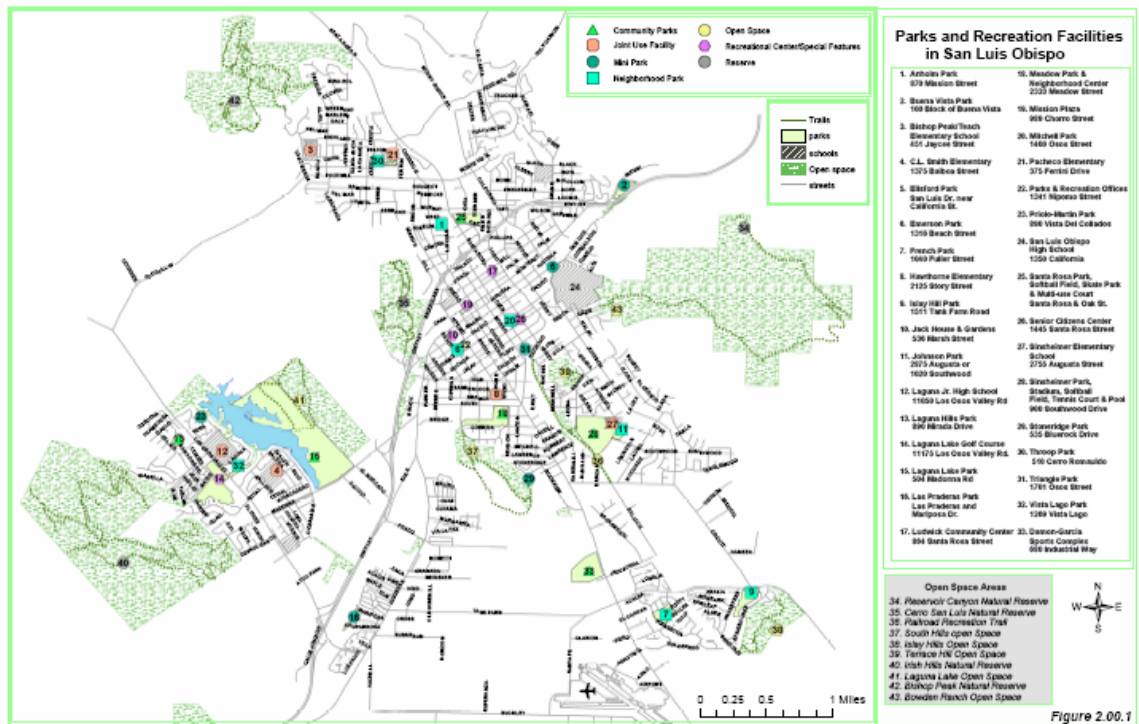


Figure 17: Parks and Recreation Facilities in San Luis Obispo (City of San Luis Obispo General Plan Parks and Recreation Element; Figure 1)

The policies and programs associated with the Parks and Recreation element that works to protect the park system within San Luis Obispo. “Parks shall be maintained in such a manner that priority will be given to the preservation of the natural beauty and safe use of the land within the system” (General Plan 7.3.13.2, 2006). All other policies and programs reflect the preservation of parks and facilities, including where goals and objectives may not have been met, or where future consideration may need to be focused such as special needs individuals and access to parks (General Plan 7.4.1, 2006).

**B2: Development and implementation of an integrated traffic management and access strategy that addresses the needs of pedestrians and conserves the historic character of the town.**

While the Land Use Element describes the City's desired character and size, the Circulation Element describes how transportation will be provided in the community envisioned by the Land Use Element. Transportation facilities and programs influence the character of neighborhoods, the location of specific land uses, and the overall form of the city.

The Circulation Element addresses the transportation goals of San Luis Obispo through a variety of integrated traffic management and access strategies that address the needs of pedestrians and conserves the historic character of the town. The overall transportation strategy works to "meet the transportation needs of current and planned-for population" as well as encourage better transportation habits where residents depend less on the single-occupant use of vehicles or increase the use of alternative forms of transportation (General Plan 2.1.5, 2006). San Luis Obispo has also developed a section within the Circulation Element to guide the management of traffic including supporting environmentally sound technological advancement such as fuel-efficient vehicles that produce minimum amounts of air pollution, supporting a shift in modes of transportation, and establishing and maintaining beautiful and livable street corridors (General Plan 2.1.8-1.11, 2006).

The City of San Luis Obispo has a small city character and it is important to the City and its residents to maintain that quality. The policies and programs within the Circulation Element focus on overall traffic reduction, improving encouraging and developing upon the existing transit service (paratransit, university service, city bus

service), bicycle transportation, and walking. All infrastructures related goals and objectives met by policies and programs are also supported in the COSE and the Land Use Element. How the streets are designed, constructed, and managed can affect levels of traffic congestion, noise and air pollution, the economic viability of commercial areas, and the quality of living throughout the City. The design and use of streets should relate to- and respect the character and type of surrounding land uses as well as preserves the historic character throughout the City.

Descriptions and standards apply to every street in the City and help manage the quality of streets in different neighborhoods as well as the quality of traffic flow. Below is a map showing current infrastructure describing the standards for each type of street.

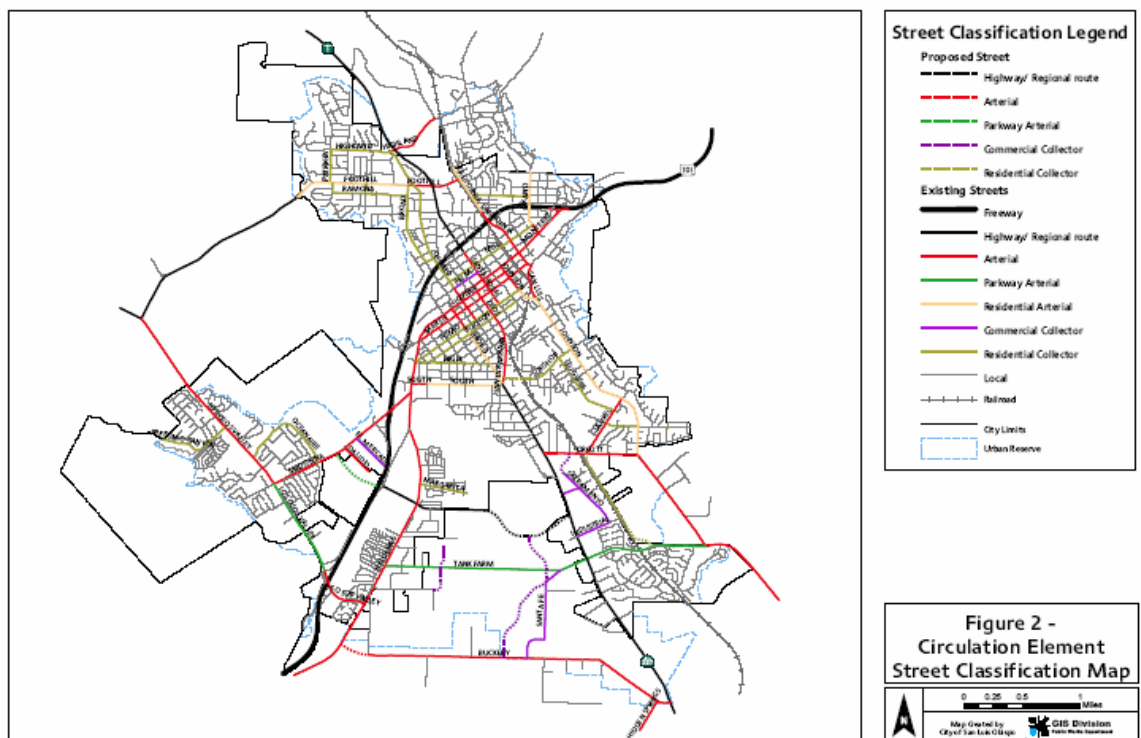


Figure 18: Circulation Element Streets Classification Map (City of San Luis Obispo General Plan Circulation Element; Figure 2)

**B3: Disability friendly access to public places and public offices.**

The City provides numerous disability services to its residents. The Achievement House holds workshops for developmentally and physically disabled adults, Meals on Wheels of San Luis Obispo provides nutritious meals for homebound persons, Pathpoint provides job experience to those with cognitive and physical disabilities, and the San Luis Obispo Department of Social Services and Adult Protective Services receives reports and handles the abuse dependent adults.

In terms of communication, the City will provide, upon request, appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities so they may participate equally in all the City's programs. Additionally, the City will make all reasonable modifications to policies and programs to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy all City programs, services, and activities (City of San Luis Obispo, nd). For example, individuals with service animals are welcome in all City offices, even where pets are generally prohibited.

**B4: Infrastructure that facilitates alternative mobility such as walking and cycling.**

The Circulation Element covers infrastructure that facilitates alternative mobility such as walking and cycling as well as the use of a very effective transit service (city bus, paratransit, and campus service). Bicycles and Walking as alternative modes of transportation are encouraged in the City (General Plan 2.4.0.1, 2006). Bikeway design and development creates a continuous network of safe and convenient bikeways that connect neighborhoods with major activity centers and with county bike routes as specified by the Bicycle Transportation Plan.

The Bicycle Transportation Plan is updated by the City and is consistent with the

objectives, policies, and standards of the Circulation Element. It establishes official bicycle routes including Campus bicycle plans, master plans, zoning regulations, and railroad bikeway and trails (General Plan 2.4.1.3-1.7, 2006).

“Walking [is] encouraged as a regular means of transportation for people who live within a 20-minute walk of school, work, or routine shopping destinations” (General Plan 2.5.0.1, 2006). Similar to the Bicycle Transportation Plan, the City has adopted a Pedestrian Transportation Plan to encourage walking and to expand infrastructure that provide linkages throughout the community. Below are examples of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in San Luis Obispo.



Figure 19: Bicycle infrastructure and pedestrian-friendly wide sidewalks

#### **B5: Easily accessible public conveniences.**

Public conveniences, or public restrooms, are available to residents in several locations throughout the City. On April 14, 2012, a site investigation was completed to determine accessibility and location of these public conveniences.



Figure 20: A public convenience in San Luis Obispo, California



While easily accessible, a minor inconvenience was locating the restrooms. They are not visible from main streets and are not designated on any signs in and around the City.

Most often, the conveniences are located in public parks. Aside from the difficulty of locating the restrooms, once found they are easily accessible and managed by the City for cleanliness.

#### **B6: Places throughout the town for people to sit down and rest.**

The Land Use Element in the General Plan provides a description of the type of walking environment the downtown area and city should include in its site design. This includes a safe, exciting place for walking as well as areas for sitting (General Plan 1.4.5, 2006). During the April 14, 2012 site investigation, photographs were used to capture the different types of places throughout the town for people to sit down and rest.



Figure 21: Public Seating in San Luis Obispo, California

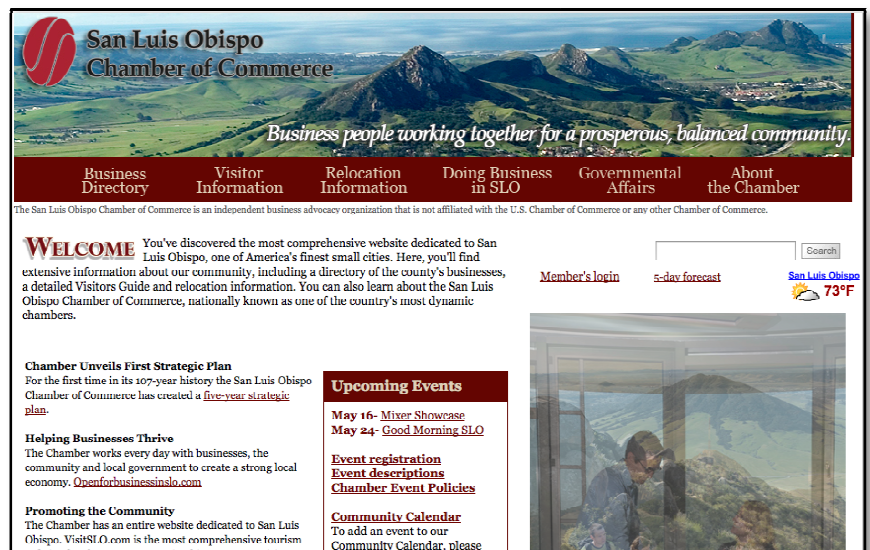
#### **B7: Customer friendly and uniform opening hours for all council offices.**

All council offices in San Luis Obispo provide customer friendly and uniform opening hours. These hours are available online at <https://www.slocity.org> as well as placed strategically on doors and/or windows of council offices. Council office hours are not only customer friendly, but also clustered around businesses and downtown locations

to facilitate ease of access.

**B8: Provision of a Public Relations service to answer media and other queries about the town.**

The San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce is an independent business advocacy organization and located in the heart of downtown San Luis Obispo. The Chamber of Commerce provides extensive information about the community, including a directory of the county's businesses, a detailed Visitors Guide and relocation information. If residents or visitors have questions they may visit the Chamber of Commerce office or they may visit the Chamber's website at <http://www.slochamber.org>. Located on the website is the most up to date information regarding the Chamber's current affairs. The Chamber of Commerce acts as "the voice of business" to promote the economic and community well being of San Luis Obispo (Chamber of Commerce, nd). The Chamber also helps residents and visitors have a broad understanding and appreciation of the great opportunities in the San Luis Obispo area, and to promote the advantages and assets of the community.



Luis Obispo Chamber of

**B9: Provision of a customer response service to answer public queries about Cittaslow.**

The City does not have a customer response service to answer public queries about Cittaslow because it is not currently a member of Cittaslow. However, if San Luis Obispo were to pursue membership, the City would need to consider providing a customer response service. The City, if interested, should contact Cittaslow USA to determine what other USA members are providing in regards to answering public questions and comments.

**8.2.3 Urban Fabric**

**C1: Plans to promote the maintenance, conservation and enhancement of historic areas, buildings and artifacts of cultural and local significance**

San Luis Obispo has a rich heritage with many cultural resources generating the City's sense of place. The Salinan and Chumash tribesman who had lived in the area for centuries left behind evidence of their presence in various archaeological, historical and spiritual sites throughout the City. The City recognizes these sites and "respectfully protects, preserves and studies" (General Plan 6.3, 2006) despite the many changes the community has seen since the founding of Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa in 1772.

Beginning in 1980, the City inaugurated a program formalizing and adopting policies to address historic and prehistoric cultural resources. Through this program, the Cultural Heritage Committee (CHC) was formed (General Plan 6.3, 2006).

Approximately 700 historic residential and commercial buildings continue to give the community its "historic" character and charm, while adapting to owners' changing uses and needs. Incentives for property owners of historic buildings are given with the help of California's Mills Act. The Mills Act is an economic incentive program to help owners

restore and preserve qualified historic buildings (City of San Luis Obispo, nd).

Despite incentive programs, and the City's maintenance and rehabilitation of historic and prehistoric resources, development pressures threaten many cultural resources. The COSE in the General Plan identifies goals and policies focused on understand, appreciating, and supporting historic and architectural resources to ensure long-term protection of cultural resources.

Programs to protect historical, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources within the City limits are managed by the Cultural Heritage Committee who work to guide development within historic districts, facilitate post-disaster historic preservation, maintain archaeological resource preservation standards, foster public awareness through educational programs, promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings, rehabilitate historic structures.

Additionally, on December 7, 2010, the City adopted the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Its purpose is to “promote the health, safety and welfare through the identification, protection, enhancement and preservation of those properties...and other cultural resources that represent distinctive elements of San Luis Obispo’s cultural, education, social, economic, political and architectural history” (San Luis Obispo Historic Preservation

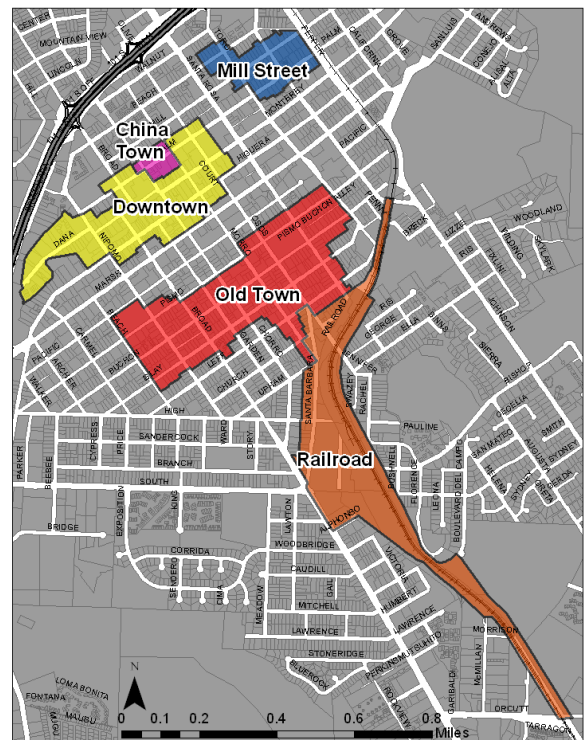


Figure 23: San Luis Obispo Historical Districts. A map of historical districts in San Luis Obispo. (City of San Luis Obispo Historic Preservation Ordinance, 2010)

Ordinance, 2010). A list of important historical resources was collected during the site investigation on April 14, 2012 and is attached as Appendix A.

**C2: Policies to protect property and ensure the safety of the community.**

Policies to protect property and ensure the safety of the community are considered in the Safety Element of the General Plan. The Safety Element must at a minimum discuss and adopt policies concerning fire, flooding, and geologic hazards (General Plan 5.0, 2006). Local jurisdictions, if applicable, may address any other relevant issues that are considered important to the community. Overall, the safety element should guide a city to reduce death, injuries, loss of property and environmental damage, and the economic and social dislocation resulting from natural hazards (General Plan 5.0, 2006).

San Luis Obispo is a city with a variety of hazards including flooding, fire, geologic hazards, hazardous materials, electromagnetic fields, and airport hazards. Refer to Appendix B for a list of figures identifying the extent of each hazard within city limits. For each hazard, acceptable risk levels are defined and policies and programs are established to achieve them. Those policies and programs are defined in the “Avoiding and Preparing for Emergencies in General” section of the Safety Element. The programs and requirements are intended to avoid several kinds of emergencies and respond to those that occur. Overall, the City is “committed to achieving acceptable levels of risk” (General Plan 9.0, 2006).

**C3: Initiatives to encourage the use of recyclable or reusable crockery and cutlery in local establishments.**

The City has a long history of proactive waste management practices that reduce waste and encourage recycling at local establishments. San Luis Obispo began a

purchasing policy for recycled products, including bonuses for outside contractors that use recycled products in their goods and services provided to the City. Waste management provides curbside pickup of “hard-to-recycle” (CAP, 2011) items twice a year.

**C4: Policies to ensure effective litter and waste management including the provision of sympathetically designed litterbins.**

The City of San Luis Obispo released a Draft Climate Action Plan (CAP) in April 2012 detailing research, outreach, local policy audit, and strategy review for reducing the carbon footprint in San Luis Obispo (CAP, 2011). The research was then used to amend and draft new local policies to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. Effective litter and waste management is one element within the CAP which proposes the prevention and reduction of waste in the City.

Currently solid waste is directed to the Cold Canyon Landfill in San Luis Obispo. The waste deposited in a landfill emits methane, which is 21 times more powerful in trapping GHGs than carbon dioxide (CAP, 2011). The City’s objective is to “prevent, reduce, reuse and recycle waste” (CAP, 2011). Focusing on increasing the rate at which waste is diverted from the Cold Canyon Landfill through recycling and other programs. Strategies include an adjusted volume-based rate system, a food-packaging ordinance, waste audit program, and improved recycling and composting options.

California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, or AB 939, required all California cities and counties to achieve a 50% diversion rate by 2000. San Luis Obispo surpasses AB 939 goals through its successful “single stream recycling” or “comingled recycling”, green waste, and construction and demolition recycling programs. The City

diverts approximately 63% of its waste from landfills (CAP, 2011). San Luis Obispo also requires new development and other major projects larger than 1,000 square feet or greater than \$50,000 to recycle 50% of construction and demolition materials.

The CAP provides several strategies to improve the diversion rate of solid waste including educational programs regarding waste management behavior. Waste reduction education will be given to the City's consumers. One example is to provide the option for home and commercial waste audits to identify and educate consumers where waste production can be reduced (CAP, 2011). "Education and outreach should focus on recycling and composting at the household and business level. Periodic public site visits to waste facilities serving the City will help consumers realize the cumulative impact of community waste" (CAP, 2011).

Other strategies aim to improve the City's capacity to divert waste to 75% by 2020 and reduce community waste to as close to zero waste as possible (CAP, 2011). Adding new services such as food composting or enhanced recycling programs, supporting waste management's ban on plastic bags, and continuing to provide and incentivize recycling and green waste services for residences and commercial customers (CAP, 2011).



Figure 24: Effective Litter Management in San Luis Obispo. Examples of public and private waste management in the City



### **C5: Initiatives to plant environment enhancing plants in public and private gardens.**

Parks and open spaces are also associated with GHG emissions from maintenance equipment ranging from mowers to lighting and irrigation systems (CAP, 2011).

Fortunately, the GHG emission reduction benefits outweigh the emissions caused from maintenance by trees and plants capturing the carbon dioxide (CAP, 2011). These benefits are noticed by the City and also identified as an avenue to increase the initiatives to plant environment enhancing plants in the community.

The General Plan requires annexation areas in the City to provide parkland as a rate of 10 acres per 1,000 residents (CAP, 2011). The Subdivision Regulations require new subdivisions to dedicate 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 anticipated residents, or pay a “fair market value” (CAP, 2011) fee instead. Existing actions to ensure environment enhancing plants in these new parks as well as public and private gardens include the use of computerized irrigation control system for all parks, use of water-efficient irrigation systems with long-term reliability, use of recycled water, use of drought-tolerant landscaping in 23 acres of parkland, recycling waste generated by maintenance equipment, and the reduction of mowing frequency during the off-season (CAP, 2011).

The CAP suggests additional programs including increasing the number of native trees along City streets, parks, and open spaces (PKS 1), continuing to acquire open space and parks for community use (PKS 2), utilizing green waste from trimming, mowing and other landscaping maintenance as compost (PKS 3), and finally fostering local food production by increasing the availability of community gardens (PKS 4) and finally control invasive species, erosion and sediment, re-vegetate open space with native plants



and trees, and restore natural processes (PKS Adaptation 1).

The General Plan also identifies natural communities within the City. A “natural community” refers to a web of organisms, other than people, living in the area (General Plan 6.7, 2006). For all plant species, the City has identified the location, habitat and buffer needs of species listed for protection as well as provide, for public use, generalized maps showing known locations of listed species (General Plan 6.7.3.1, 2006) as identified by experts from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game or the Native Plant Society. Below is an example of a map displaying species of local concern in the City. This includes animals as well as plant species, however there are more specific maps showing just plant species and their habitat and extent.

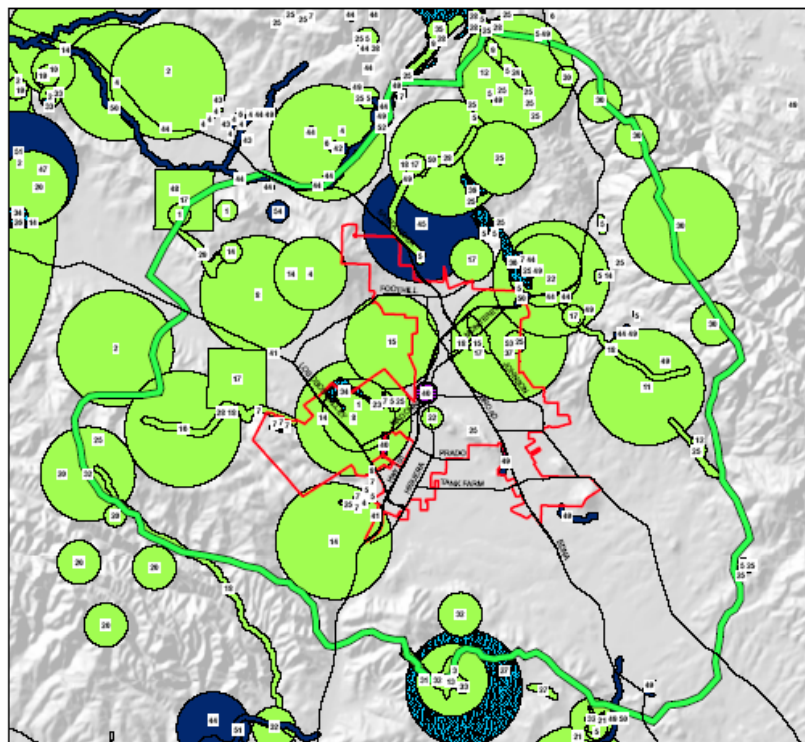


Figure 25: Native Plant Species in San Luis Obispo. (City of San Luis Obispo General Plan; Conservation and Open Space, Figure 2)

**C6: Provision and promotion of interactive websites where the public can communicate with the administrators of the town.**

The public is able to communicate with the administrators of the town by visiting the City's interactive website located at <http://www.slocity.org>. From the City's homepage the public is able to navigate to the many links connecting them to the activities and programs San Luis Obispo offers. The "Contact Us" page will provide residents and visitors with an address, phone number, as well as opening hours. Residents and the public accessing the website can also connect from the homepage to the department specific homepages, for example, Community Development, to access the City's General Plan.



Figure 26: The City of San Luis Obispo Homepage. A useful tool used by public to contact administrators and employees of the City. ([www.slocity.org](http://www.slocity.org))

**C7: Policies to promote eco-friendly architecture.**

Energy use from buildings accounts for 43% of community-wide GHG emissions (CAP, 2011). Fossil fuels provide the energy to residential, commercial, and industrial buildings, and facilities. The energy is used to light, heat, and cool buildings, as well as power associated appliances and electronics used within each building.

Title 24, the California Energy Code, and the California Green Building Standards Code or CALGreen (CAP, 2011) requires direct electricity, natural gas, and water savings for every new home or business built in California. Also includes requirements for lighting, insulation, and equipment upgrades to residential and nonresidential buildings. Existing local policies that reduce energy use within the community promoting eco-friendly architecture, can be found in the General plan, Community Design Guidelines and Zoning Regulations. These policies include, design standards that promote sustainable and efficient development, such as maximizing passive ventilation and cooling systems, and use of natural light within buildings, application requirements for large development projects to complete green building and low impact development checklists, additional energy efficiency performance standards for proposed buildings taller than 50 feet, and energy efficiency mitigations for projects that may have a significant environmental impact (CAP, 2011).

**C8: Production of a Town Plan, Conservation Area Appraisal, Town Design Statement or similar to promote appreciation of historic centers and to make them user-friendly.**

One type of plan cities in California use to promote appreciation of certain districts, centers, or sites, is a Specific Plan. A Specific Plan is a tool for the implementation of the general plan of the City. It links policies of the general plan and

the individual development proposals in a defined area. It can be as broad as simply identifying development concepts, or as detailed as providing direction to every corner of development from the type, location, and intensity of uses to the design and capacity of the infrastructure. When a city has identified historic districts, a historic dimension is added to any specific plan that may include development in these important areas. Additionally, cities will prepare surveys to evaluate whether districts should be modified to include new historic resources.

The City is in the process of preparing a historic resources survey that will include several neighborhoods. The survey will be evaluating individual properties for inclusion on the City's Historic Resource inventory and evaluating whether the boundaries of the historic districts (Figure 23) should be modified.

#### **8.2.4 Local Produce and Product**

##### **D1: Maintenance of an up to date register of locally produced goods and producers within the natural hinterland of the town.**

San Luis Obispo County has a farmers market every day of the week that provides locally produced goods and access to its food producers.



› County Farmer's  
intyfarmers.org)

The County also provides an up to date register of all locally produced goods and producers in the county, which includes the City of San Luis Obispo. At <http://www.slocountyfarmers.org/> the San Luis Obispo County Farmers' Market Association (SLOFMA) establishing policies, and giving directions to staff on how the market should run, evolve and grow. The website also provides information on reducing

carbon footprint, vegetables in season for personal gardens, and reasons for shopping at a farmers' market.

**D2: Organization of events and training to raise public awareness and appreciation of local cultural and artistic traditions and skills.**

The City of San Luis Obispo organizes multiple events throughout the year that raise public awareness and appreciation of local cultural and artistic traditions and skills. At <http://www.visitslo.org> residents and visitors can navigate the website to find a calendar of events as well as local cultural sites to visit. Some of the events in the City include Festival Mozaic, a presentation of chamber music, orchestra and educational musical events year-round. Most recently, Festival Mosaic was held at Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa. The music represents five centuries of musical entertainment on the Central Coast and is attended by hundreds of individuals. A newer, cultural and artistic event becoming a popular tradition is the SLO International Film Festival (<http://slofilmfest.org/>). Short films ranging from documentaries to narrative features are enjoyed and following the screenings, awards are given for excellence in filmmaking.

**D3, D5 – D9: Policies to encourage and provide space for farmers and organic markets.**



image  
during

The SLOFMA provides detailed locations for farmers' markets in the San Luis Obispo County. There are three farmers' markets in San Luis Obispo. The Thursday night SLO County Farmers' Market is one of the most popular farmers' markets in the County and runs year-round. Every week this market draws over 10,000 market-goers and is one of the largest in the state of California (SLOFMA, nd). The

booths span over two city blocks along Higuera Street, the main street through downtown San Luis Obispo. It runs from 18:00 to 21:00 and runs in conjunction with the San Luis Obispo Downtown Association activities and includes live music, food and children's events. A Saturday morning farmers' market is held in the Gottschalk's Parking Lot (now a Forever 21) from 8:00 to 10:30. The market has grown to over 60 vendors and is the busiest of the SLOFMA.

SLOFMA also provides educational opportunities and programs that encourage and support organic, traditional and sustainable farming. Programs such as "In-Season Veggies" is one way farmers can educate the public preserve and support unique local foodstuffs and encourage local, organic farming (SLOFMA, nd).

#### **D4: Policies to increase awareness of good food and nutrition.**



Living in San Luis Obispo County.

Health Eating Active

Living San Luis Obispo

(HEAL-SLO) is a countywide group founded and inspired by healthy eating choices and active living for all ages in the San Luis Obispo County area. It was founded in 2005 as a response to surveys conducted to measure the health (based on height and weight) of children. Data revealed that SLO County, from preschool age to adults are at risk or are overweight or not physically fit, with 56.6% of adults as overweight or obese. The costs that come later on in life inspired community action, which created HEAL-SLO.

In 2006 HEAL-SLO, the Health Commission, community members, and Board of Supervisors developed a countywide Community Strategic Action Plan. It was to be a guide, which included recommended actions for combatting childhood obesity and

healthy eating for all ages.

The Community Action Plan is a toolkit for raising awareness about the Community Action Plan to increase Healthful Eating and Regular Physical Activity through a defined communications strategy, public relations and other outreach efforts. The Plan creates and funds a position within the County Public Health Department to coordinate and support countywide collaborative prevention efforts. Appendix C describes the goals, strategies, and policies to implement healthy eating and increased physical activity in the county.

### **8.2.5 Hospitality and Community Goals**

#### **E1: Commitment to develop a local Slow Food convivium.**

San Luis Obispo currently has a university chapter committed to the development of the Slow Food convivium. “The San Luis Obispo chapter of Slow Food works to encourage the support of our abundant local food producers and wineries to promote the preservation and sustainability of this vibrant Central Coast region by uniting producers with the local community through educational events and outreach initiatives” (Slow Food SLO, nd).

The Slow Food chapter in San Luis Obispo “wants to get the San Luis Obispo community more interested in shopping locally and cooking fresh meals” (Koschalk, 2009). The Chapter’s main objective is to encourage people to adopt a healthy lifestyle by teaching how to prepare home-cooked meals rather than seeking out fast food options. The Chapter also wants to inform the public about how making good food choices don’t just affect the people’s health, but also how buying locally grown food can benefit the environment (Koschalk, 2009).

The Chapter, since 2009 has only been a part of a few events, however, each event has been successful in spreading the news about Slow Food. For those interested in Slow Food San Luis Obispo, the Chapter has set up a Facebook page to advertise their events and gain more support and members.

**E2: Provision of multi-lingual signposting and visitor information.**

While information is provided in different guides located at the downtown Chamber of Commerce location as well as the History Center of San Luis Obispo, multi-lingual signposting around San Luis Obispo is rare. Fortunately, groups can be guided through the City with an interpreter. For those who do not speak English and are looking to tour around the City on their own, they may have some trouble finding their way around. The City should invest in multi-lingual signposting, or at least consider signposting that has universal images that can be interpreted easily.

**E3: Provision of customer service training for all those providing services to visitors.**

This type of provision is required for all businesses that provide services to visitors. If San Luis Obispo pursues membership with Cittaslow, the City should investigate all public service businesses and ensure that a provision is developed for each, which provides training for all those providing services to visitors. The City could develop this and training could potentially be conducted by the City to apply consistency in customer service training.



**E4: Development and maintenance of well-marked tourist routes with interpretation and information.**

The City has developed and maintains an online resource for visitors and tourists. At <http://www.visitslo.com>, tourists can discover lodging, shopping, news/media concerning local events in San Luis Obispo, restaurants, and activities for all ages. Here, tourists are able to connect or link to other websites such as <http://www.historycenterslo.org>, which supports tourist-related activities such as historical walking or bicycling route maps.

**E5: Production of printed guides about Cittaslow in the town.**

This action would be completed upon membership. The organization that takes responsibility for this should seek guidance from other Cittaslow USA membership towns to identify the important and necessary information for the printed guide. The printed guides should be made available in businesses that promote the Cittaslow philosophy, as well as local government and council offices such as the Chamber of Commerce.

**E6: Promotion of a wide cross section of social events, sports clubs and volunteering opportunities for the whole community.**

Volunteer opportunities, sports clubs, and social events are available in the City and across the County of San Luis Obispo. Interested persons can visit <http://www.volunteerslo.org> for a list of volunteer opportunities ranging from Habitat for Humanity to National Trails day (Volunteer Slo, 2010). Sports events and clubs are also available on the city's website. Groups or individuals choose the sport of their choice and are introduced to other individuals or groups to form teams. The City as well as Cal Poly have sports events year-round available to the public.

**E7: Provision of managed car parks in areas offering easy access to the town centre.**

San Luis Obispo's central business district includes the highest concentration of commercial, office, and governmental uses in the city. Parking is needed for patrons of downtown businesses, tourists and employees. Use of curbside parking in residential areas can affect the character and quality of these areas. The following policies identify the City's role in providing and managing downtown parking and addressing neighbourhood parking needs.

Commercial Parking will be regulated to encourage alternative modes of transportation. This policy will work to reduce congestion. Curb parking in the commercial core is intended for short-term use by those visiting businesses and public facilities. Public parking and parking structures are provided within the commercial core and managed through the Parking Management Plan.

**E8: Promotion of special local events to encourage local people to enjoy local facilities and participate fully in community life.**

San Luis Obispo promotes current special local events through a number of opportunities. The City's website is one place local people are encouraged to explore to find local events, as well as public notice boards where local organizations are able to post upcoming events. Save Our Downtown is one local organization that invites locals to meetings and to participate fully in their events through notice boards. At the end of the meetings Save Our Downtown will ask for contact information from participants in order to notify residents of future events. If San Luis Obispo were to apply for membership with Cittaslow, the City should consider a more central and easily accessible public notice board in the downtown core area. The downtown area is visited most often by

local people and visitors who may be interested in local events and participating in community life, a centrally located public notice board would help residents and visitors have access to important event information.

**E9: Promotion of local initiatives that link into Cittaslow goals and principles.**

This type of promotion of local initiatives would be pursued if San Luis Obispo pursued membership. Local initiatives could be posted on the City's website, or alternate website solely used to promote Cittaslow goals and principles, linked from the City's website so visitors could find it easily.

### **8.3 Recommendations for the City of San Luis Obispo**

Becoming a member of the Cittaslow movement is carefully controlled by the international organization. Cities are admitted to membership only after trained "operatives" have prepared an initial report on the city's commitment to Slow City principles (Mayer, Knox, 2009). A community quality-of-life indicator system, covering the six key indicators, is then detailed in an audit report. Appendix C shows an example of a Slow City indicator and point system by which operatives use to score the candidate city.

When a city seeks to join the movement, it has to undertake a self-assessment using a four-point scale (0-3) for each of the indicators. The scale reflects whether a Slow City indicator is fully or partially implemented as a policy or a program, planned for, or not addressed at all (Mayer, Knox, 2009). Three points are awarded to the city when an indicator has been completely implemented by the city, two points if developed but only partially implemented, one point if developed but not yet implemented, and zero if not considered at all. Depending on the level of implementation, towns would be able

to gain an ideal or a maximum level of points. In order to compute the actual score, the observed points for each indicator are multiplied by a weight that assigns importance to the indicator (Mayer, Knox, 2009). Such a system allows for variation among the candidate cities regarding their commitment and implementation efforts of Slow City ideas.

Once a city is certified, it must be re-certified every four years and yearly membership fees apply depending on population sizes (Mayer, Knox, 2009). Each Slow City should document the progress made toward each indicator, as the movement plans to evaluate existing members on a continual basis.

### **8.3.1 San Luis Obispo Self-Assessment**

Currently, the City of San Luis Obispo meets 50 of the 55 Cittaslow criteria. In most categories, San Luis Obispo meets the criteria in multiple ways, while others in single. The five criteria, which were not met and are recommended to become a Cittaslow member, include the following:

- Environmental Goal A10 – Meeting Agenda 21 Requirements.
- Infrastructure Goal B9 – A customer service response to discuss Cittaslow with interested parties.
- Hospitality and Community Goal E2 – Multilingual Signposting.
- Hospitality and Community Goal E5 – Production of printed guides informing residents and visitors of Cittaslow philosophies and membership.
- Hospitality and Community Goal E9 – Local initiatives that link Cittaslow to the City.

The City does not currently associate with Agenda 21 requirements, however, does represent a number of similar goals and objectives ranging from sustainable building practices to employing best practices in renewable resources and waste management areas. If publicly supported, the City can achieve this environmental indicator by researching the necessary steps to become an Agenda 21 affiliate.

For the single infrastructure indicator and E5 and E9 of the hospitality and community indicators, the City should pursue these if they choose to become a member. The City could potentially work with the Chamber of Commerce and Community Development Department to formulate a plan to provide information, customer service responses, and increased initiatives that link to the Cittaslow way of life.

The final social indicator, hospitality and community goal E2, the City should invest in multilingual signposting to satisfy this recommendation. Any formulation of ideas or plans should be linked and consistent to the current San Luis Obispo Sign Ordinance. One suggestion includes creating universal signs containing images rather than multiple languages. The images could relate to a range of activities for tourists and residents including the distinct historic districts or providing directions to public conveniences.

If these five indicators are implemented or if the City of San Luis Obispo makes the commitment to implement policies and programs that fulfill these indicators, the City will have fulfilled the entire 55-Cittaslow criteria. As illustrated in other member cities in the United States, the process of applying for membership is fairly simple and reaps economic, social, and cultural benefits for the entire town as well as visitors. However, the amount of information available to potential cities in the United States is lacking. As

of now, all but the three American cities are located in other countries. While it is the philosophy of Cittaslow to promote culture, tradition, and identity within the member town, it would behoove member cities and Cittaslow representatives to launch a wider campaign to get the attention and increase the knowledge of candidate cities in the United States who are interested in an alternative to current urban development patterns.

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## **Appendices**

## **A List of Historical Resources in San Luis Obispo**

## **HEAL-SLO Community Goals, Strategies & Recommendations**



## **Example of a Slow City Indicator and Point system**